



Then was I in his yet
as one that found saour.
Cant. 8. 10.



They have humbled themselves
therefore I will not destroy them.
2 Chron. 12. 7

THE
GOLDEN SCEPTER.
with
The Churches Marriage,
And
THE CHURCHES CARRIAGE
In three Treatises.

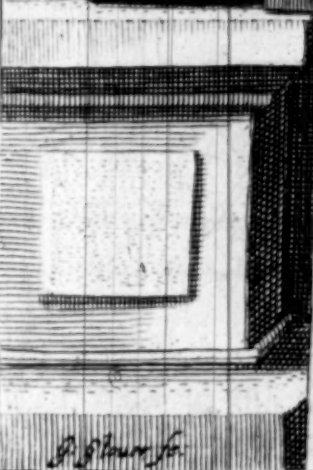
BY
The late Learned Divine,
JOHN PRESTON.
Dⁿ in D.^y Chap: in Ordinary
to his Ma^{ty} M^r of Emmanuell
Colledge in Cambridge.

And sometime Preacher of
Lincolnes Inne.

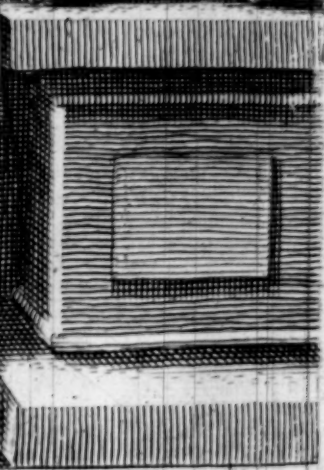
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Royall Exchange, & at f. Marygold in Pauls
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in Paten Nether Row. 1638.



I am my beloueds
and my beloued is mine.
Cant. 6. 7



When hope is
broken, but the
heart is still
alive.



202262

THE GOLDEN SCEPTER
held forth to the Humble.

WITH THE
CHVRCHES DIGNITIE
by her Marriage.

AND THE
CHVRCHES DVTIE
in her Carriage.

In three Treatises.

The first delivered in sundry Sermons in *Cambridge*
for the weekly Fasts, 1625.

The two later in *Lincolnes Inne.*

By the late learned and reverend Divine,
IOHN PRESTON,

Dr. in Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinary to His Majesty,
Mr. of *Emanuel* Colledge in *Cambridge*, and
sometime Preacher at *Lincolnes Inne.*

IER. 3. 12, 14.

*Returne thou backsliding Israel; saith the LORD, and I will not cause mine anger to
fall upon you: for I am mercifull, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever.
Returne O backsliding Israel, for I am married unto you.*

HOS. 2. 7.

I will goe and returne unto my first husband, for then it was better with me than now.

LONDON,

Printed by R. B. for N. Bourne at the Royall Exchange, and
A. Boler at the Marigold in PAULS Church-yard, and
R. Harford at the gilt BIBLE in *Queenes-head*
Alley in *Pater-noster Row.* 1638.

202262



TO THE TRULY
VERTVOWS
AND RELIGIOVS
Gentleman, **RICHARD**
KNIGHTLEY, *Esquire.*

SIR,



LT hath beene our custome hitherto, who were deputed by the Author to this service, to inscribe or dedicate the severall tractates we have put forth, to some or other of his speciall friends, as proofs of our fidelity, in discharging of the trust reposed in us, and speciall emblemes of the Authours great abilities. For if in

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

every triviall and small Epistle, a man do ex-
arare animam, im:print upon the paper some
peeces of his soule, he doth it much more
doubtlesse in his studied exercises, wherein
he cannot but conceive his memory may
live, and some part of himselfe be kept a-
live, and sweet to all posterity.

Horat.

If he could say, *non omnis moriar*, because
he was a Poet, and think his Poem *perenni-
us ære*, a monument that time it selfe would
not be able to divoure: how much more
may he say it that drawes himselfe unto the
life in an immortall Dye, and writes such
characters as are not subject to decay and
perish? *For all flesh is grasse, and all the glory
of man as the flower of grasse: the grasse wi-
thereth, and the flower falleth away, but the
word of the Lord endureth for ever: and this
is the word, which by the Gospell is preached
unto you, 1 Pet. 1.24, 25.*

Seeing therefore it hath pleased God to
preserve these peeces yet alive, and after
long deferring and desiring, to produce
and bring them forth to publike view;
we have thought good, in a prime and
speciall

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

speciall manner to entitle you unto them, and to send them out unto the world under the covert and shadow of your name.

For seeing it pleased the Authour to choole your habitation, wherein to put off and lay up his (then) decaying and declining body, why should it not bee proper and convenient, to send these living and surviving peeces of his soule, for to attend it? considering especially, how much his body heretofore had waited on his soule, which otherwise, in humane probability, might still have beene alive.

Neither is there any doubt, but these vigorous and usefull breathings of his spirit, will find accesse and entertainment, where his languid, and at last, his breathlesse body did. Especially these which may more properly be counted his, than any thing that hitherto hath seene the light, and this wee dare be bold to say for these, that none of them did more expresse the Authour to the life.

Those that did either know him in his
life

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

lifetime, or since have much and frequently perused his writings, shall find these three things every where occurring.

The foulness of sinne, the freeness of grace, and the fulness of duty, which in other peeces onely scattered and sparkling here and there, are here collected under proper heads, and handled so professedly and clearly, as nothing more concerning them can be desired.

In the first are the danger and deformity sinne, driving the spouse to sad and low expressions of her selfe, as those virgins were commanded, *Deut. 21. 11, 12, 13. Even to shave her head, and pare her nailes, and bewaile her father and her mother, that is, her naturall and inbred evils and corruptions.*

In the second, is the glorious freeness of the grace of Christ, receiving this dejected and humbled captive unto favour, and, with that great King, *Hest. 5. 2. reaching forth the Golden Scepter of his love and mercy to her, not onely to the pardon and forgiveness of all her sin, but intitling also of her unto all things, for all things are hers, whether*

Paul,

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are hers, because she is Christs, 1 Cor. 3. 21, 22.

In the third, the fulnesse of her duty is prest upon her, for, the grace of God, that bringeth salvation, doth no sooner appeare to any man, but it teacheth to deny ungodlinesse and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, Tit. 2. 11, 12. that as before Ahasuerus had the virgins purified that were to approach his bed, with various and costly powders and perfumes, Hest. 2. 12, &c. so Christ, when once the soule is faithfully espoused unto him, perfumes and washes her in his most precious blood, and beautifies her with variety of graces, that he may present her to himselfe a glorious Spouse, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy, and without blame, Eph. 5. 27.

And now what rests, but that these Treatises crave shadow & protection from you, nay owne you for their Patron? Doth not the low and humble posture of your mind

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

mind intitle you unto the first? your high opinion of free grace, unto the second? and your holy and spotlesse carriage, to the third? Having so just a title (besides other ingagements) by this threefold clayme, 'tis but justice to call your name upon it; and, by your acceptance of it, you shall shew friendship to this Posthume, and especially oblige

*Your already much obliged,
and ingaged,*

THOMAS GOODWIN.

THOMAS BALL.



The Contents of the first Treatise.

Doct. 1.	God afflicts his owne people.	3
Reas. 1.	Because he loves them.	4
2.	That his name be not blasphemed.	Ibid.
3.	He will be sanctified in those that draw neare him.	Ibid.
4.	He walks among them.	5
Vse 1.	To feare the Lord.	6
2.	Want of feare provoketh God.	13
3.	Gods severity to wicked men.	18
4.	Not to think strange that God afflicts his.	19
Doct. 2.	God pities his people in affliction.	20
Reas. 1.	He is slow to affl. et.	21
2.	He sustaines them in affliction.	Ibid.
3.	He brings them through affliction.	25
Vse 1.	Not to be discouraged in affliction.	32
2.	To come to God when we have offended him.	35
3.	To lead us to repentance.	37
4.	To chooseth the Lord for our God.	41
5.	To confirme us in that choice.	45
Doct. 3.	The Lords name is called upon his people.	47
Reas.	God hath chosen them.	48
Vse 1.	To learne obedience.	49
2.	To humble our selves.	53
3.	Not to pollute Gods name.	59
4.	Not to be ashamed to professe Gods name.	Ibid.
	Comfor, t concerning our selves, and the Church.	63
Doct. 4.	Without humiliation no mercy.	66
	Reas.	

The Contents.

Reas. 1. The necessity of humiliation.	69
2. Els there will be no returning from sin.	71
3. Els there will be no constancy.	73
4. Els God should not have the praise of his mercy.	74
Vse 1. Exhortation to the humble.	101
2. To those that are not humbled.	103
Doct. 5. The Lord is mercifull to the humble.	112
Reas. 1. To give God the glory.	113
2. Humility keeps a man in compasse.	Ibid.
3. It makes him usefull to others.	114
4. It makes him obedient.	114
Vse 1. Consolation to the humble.	115
2. To strengthen faith.	118
3. To be humble in afflictions.	123
4. Exhortation to be more humble.	124
5. Not to apply the promises without humiliation.	131
Doct. 6. All performances nothing without seeking Gods face.	132
Reas. God is holy.	150
Vse 1. To examine if we seeke Gods face.	153
2. To seeke the Lord, and not our selves.	168
3. Not to forget the Lord in the midst of his mercies.	172
Doct. 7. No interest in promises without turning from evill wayes.	186
Vse 1. Examination.	197
2. No duties serve without turning.	219
3. Good purposes alone insufficient.	222
Doct. 8. Turning from our evill wayes difficult.	224
Reas. 1. They are pleasant.	Ibid.
2. Agree-	

The Contents.

2. Agreeable to nature.	225
3. They are backed by the law of the members.	Ibid.
Vse. To make our labour answerable to the worke.	229
Doct. 9. All sinnes forgiven to the humble that forsake sinne.	254
Reas. 1. From the truth of God.	256
2. From his goodnesse.	257
Vse 1. To exclude wicked men from mercy.	263
2. To trust perfectly in Gods mercy.	267
3. Exhortation to be humbled.	272
Doct. 10. All calamities from sin.	279
Vse 1. To looke to the root of calamities.	281
2. To see sin in its own colours.	283
3. How to remove crosses.	284
Doct. 11. If sinne be not removed as well as the crosse, it is never removed in mercy.	287
Reas. 1. Because sin is worse than any crosse.	288
The Lord doth nothing in vaine.	Ibid.
Vse. By the issue of our afflictions to judge of our estate, and Gods love to us.	Ibid.
Doct. 12. Take away sin, and the crosse will depart.	290
Reas. 1. Because crosses come from sin.	290
2. God never afflicts but for our profit.	291
Vse. To comfort us against our feares, that the crosse will alway continue.	Ibid.

The

The Contents.




The Contents of the second Treatise.

Doct.	T Here is a match betweene Christ and his Church.	1
Vse 1.	To apply Christ himselfe.	6
	2. To perswade men to take Christ.	23
	Motives to it.	Ibid.
	Impediments.	38



The Contents of the third Treatise.

Doct.	E Very one that taketh Christ ought to be subject to him, and it is best for him.	76
Reas. 1.	He is the head.	78
	He is a Saviour.	80
Vse.	Exhortation to come to Christ.	82
Doct.	Christ is the Head and Saviour of his Church, and every member of it.	90
Vse 1.	To be obedient to Christ.	91
	2. To choose Christ for our Head.	93
	3. To draw influence from him.	95
	4. How to know we are in Christ.	99
	Trials of our subjection to Christ.	104
	5. To be the glory of Christ.	133
	6. To trie our condition.	137



THE GOLDEN SCEPTER.

2 CHRON. 7. 14.

If my people which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seeke my face, and turne from their wicked wayes : then will I heare in heaven, and will bee mercifull to their sin, and will heale their land.



These words containe the answer God gave to *Salomons* Prayer, which hee made when hee dedicated the Temple : His Prayer was, that when they prayed on earth, hee should heare in heaven: And God promifeth in the words I have read to do all that *Salomon* asketh : which promise containes three parts.

First, That hee would heare in heaven, which

B

phrase

I.

phrase notes out either his power, that he is able to bring to passe what he assents to doe; men are said to heare on earth, because they can doe little; but God in heaven; or else it implies, that though hee seemes to be farre off from his people, yea though in heaven, yet he will heare at last.

2 The *Second* part is, that *he will pardon their sins*, and it is of all other mercies the greatest, for sin hinders all good things, and openeth a gap to all evils, and therefore *David* saith, *Blessed is the man, whose sin is forgiven*: of all requests it is the greatest that wee can make, and of all grans the greatest that God vouchsafeth.

3 *Thirdly*, He will *heale their land*, and remove their affliction: Now observe the order of this, in that before he doth it, he pardons their sin.

Now this promise is farther let forth by two things.

1 *First*, the persons to whom it is made; the people of *Israel* and *Judah*, notified by two attributes; First they are his people; Secondly, called by his name, or on whom his name is called, as the name of the *husband* is called upon the *wife*, or of the *father* upon the *sonnes*; and as they in *Antioch*, and we are called *Christians* from *CHRIST*.

2 *Secondly*, the conditions this promise is made upon, for it is the Lords manner to put promises upon conditions.

1 *First*, if they bee humbled, and humble themselves.

2 *Secondly*, if that humiliation, bee not contained within the compasse of their breasts onely, but expressed

God afflicts his owne People.

3

pressed by prayer and confession of sins.

Thirdly, if they *seeke my face*, seeke to bee reconciled, seeke his presence as separated from all things else, not seeking Corne, Wine, Oyle, but *G o d* himselfe.

3

Fourthly, if they part with their sins in seeking, for they cannot maintaine Communion with him else, for *God dwels in light*, and he who *walkes in darkenesse*, can have no fellowship with him. And thus you have the Analysis of the words; wee in handling them will not use this method, but begin with the words as they lye, and will observe first these three Doctrines from these words.

4

If my people called by my Name

F*irst*, God sends sharpe afflictions on his owne people: this appeares by the Coherence, for in the words before the text, *If I send plague, &c.* then *if my people, &c.*

1 Doctr.

Secondly, that yet in them the Lord is very tender and full of compassion to his people; this loving compellation [*my people*] argues as much, it is as if he should say, I cannot forget you, for you are called by my Name, you are mine, though I thus punish you.

2 Doctr

Thirdly, that the *Lords Name is called upon his people*. For the *first*, the Scripture is frequent in examples of this kind, so as I shall not need to stand to name any places to you, they are so well knowne already.

3 Doctr

I come to reasons of it, why it is so.

B 2

First

Reas. I.

First, he sends sharpe afflictions on them because he loves them, they are such as belong to him, and the ground of this reason is, because, *Ira est tam ex amore quam ex odio*; Anger is as much out of love as hatred; it is a true rule though it may seeme a paradox, because when one loves another, hee desires much from the party beloved and expects much from him, and therefore a crosse and stubborne action from such a one provokes more to anger, than from any other man; as from a Son, from a Friend, from a Wife, it woundeth more; and therefore God saith of himselfe, that he is a *jealous* God: Jealousie is a mixt affection of love and anger, the meaning is, if I find my peoples affection stealing out from me, I am presently affected, as a jealous husband useth to be in such a case, and there is no anger to that, nor none sooner stirred: God will indure ten times as much from another, but when one that he hath taken into covenant with him, offends him, he is angry, and will therefore be sure to send some sharpe affliction on him, which is the fruit of his anger, for his anger is not in vaine.

2. *Secondly*, hee doth it that his *Name* might not be *blasphemed*, that was the reason he gives, why hee punished *David* when he committed adultery, for the Lord must of necessity doe it for their sakes that stand by and looke on; to shew to them that he cannot indure such things, no not in his owne people.

3. *Thirdly*, because he hath said, that he will be *sanctified* of all that draw neere to him, he will have them know that he is an holy God, hating iniquity; and that none should draw nigh to him, but such as have holy

holy hearts, and pure hards: and this was the reason why he did send fire upon *Corah, Dathan and Abiram*; *The Lord hath separated you, and you draw neare to himselfe*, saith *Moses* to them, and that in the nearest manner to doe service as Priests to offer Sacrifice, and you are among the heads of the people, and therefore he will not forbear you, others that are as farre off (it may bee) God will long and farre forbear, but others that are sanctified to the Lord, and draw neare to him in profession and in the opinion of others, and also so indeed, of those God will either bee sanctified by their bringing holy hearts before him, or else he will vindicate his holinesse by punishing them, and will not suffer them to go on with prophane hearts.

Fourthly, because they are *his people among whom hee walkes*, and with whom he dwels, *2 Cor. 6.* and the three last verses, and the beginning of the seventh Chapter, he is conversant among them; But you will say, is he not everywhere else? yes, but he is there as a man is in his owne house, among his sons and daughters, observing every thing, looking narrowly to them, and because he is still with them, therefore hee will endure no uncleannesse among them: thence it was that in the Campe he commanded every man to carry his paddle with him, when he went aside to bury it, that no outward filthinesse might appeare, for *I walke among you*, hee did it, to shew by that which is odious to us, that wee should hide what is odious to him, namely sin, and filthinesse, which caused him to loath his house, to loath *Israel*: when *Israel* was so unswept and so filthy,

God loathed it and so departed from it, and so *Asahel* came upon them. God will bee sure to plow his owne ground, whatsoever becomes of the wast, to weede his owne Garden, though the rest of the world should be let alone, to grow wild.

But you will object and say, that the Saints wee see, often sin, and afflictions doe not follow.

I answer, it may be and doth fall out often, and the reason is because God findes his worke done to his hand. If they plow themselves up, God will not, but if we do it by halves (as that is our fault we leave many balkes behinde us) then God alwaies comes with afflictions, yet then the lesse that you leave behind unplowed, the lesse will God afflict you: if you humble your selves throughly, you shall escape, except only in the case of scandall, and then God must needs do it for their sakes that looke on, as in *David*, God would have all the world see his punishment on him, as well as they knew of his sinne, but this comfort you may have though you have greatly sinned, (if not scandalously) that humble your selves throughly, and you shall escape.

Vse 1.

Learne from hence to feare the Lord, to tremble at his words, and seeing he will endure no uncleanness in his owne people, *stand in awe and sin not*: labour to bring your hearts to such a constitution, to such an awfull respect as to feare to omit any good duty, or commit the least sinne, and this had need to be urged upon you, for it is the cause of all that laxiture and loosenesse in our profession, that we doe not feare the Lord as we should. If we had
the

the feare of the Lord before our eyes (as the Apostles speakes *Rom. 3.*) that is, if we saw the Lord so as to feare him, we should walke warily and look how, and where wee set every step, and the reason why you are so uneven and not like your selves, is from want of the feare of the Lord : Now the reason of that phrase of the *Apostle* that the *feare of God* is said to bee *before your eyes* is from the nature of feare, *Timor figit oculum*, as if a man bee busie about any thing, if there be any thing that he feares, he wil still have an eye to that, and he watcheth least it should come with some by blow, when he thinks not of it, and so doth the feare of the Lord worke where it is, it fastneth our eyes on him : And if the Lord were thus before our eyes to feare him, it would make us walke more evenly and more constantly with him. And therefore when the holy Ghost in Scripture would chuse to commend a man, he singles out this propertie, especially of fearing God, as that *Iob* was an *upright man fearing God*, and so speaking of *Cornelius*, it is said that hee was, *a just man fearing God*, and so *Abraham* when hee would expresse the wickednesse of the Court of *Abimelech*, he sayes, *the feare of the Lord is not in this place*, that is, there is no religion nor good men, God is not regarded there, and the more feare, the lesse sin, *stand in awe and sinne not*. If a man stand in awe of the Lord he would be afraid of every sin, he would be afraid of vaine thoughts, to bee vaine in his speeches and to give way to the least wickednesse, afraid of every inordinate affection, hee would be afraid how hee spent the time from morning till night, and how to

Psal. 4.

give an account thereof, afraid of recreations, least he should sleepe too much, or sleepe too little, eate too much, or eate too little, as knowing all is but to whet the sicke to make him the fitter for his harvest worke, and therefore would be afraid to forbear refreshments too much or to use them too little. I beseech you therefore that are in Covenant with the Lord, and nearest to him, that know your selves to bee within the Covenant, to consider this and learne to feare. And to helpe you in this, take two places of Scripture, 1 Pet. 1. 7. *If you call on the Father who judgeth without respect of persons, according to every mans worke, passe the time of your sojourning here in feare*; that is, seeing you have such a Father that judgeth every person, all his children, he will certainly afflict you if you offend him: Therefore feare to do it. The other is, Heb. 12. 28, 29. *Let us serve him with all reverence and godly feare, for even our God is a consuming fire*, [*our God*] whom we worship is not made all of mercy, he hath other Attributes joyned with them, *so you he is a consuming fire*; If you will not serve him with feare, though not immediately to consume you utterly, yet to afflict you, and thereby to consume your lusts; so as it is a dangerous thing to be negligent of him, to meddle with him who is a consuming fire.

How sharply did God deale with *David*, who was yet nearer him than any of us; first he tooke away the child from him, which to him was a sharpe affliction, he being a tender Father, and had a strong affection to his life, as appeares by his fastings, and the like hee had to *Absolon*, who yet was a Rebelle against

against him; and then to have almost all the people to fall from him, when he was an old King, to have Concubines abused so openly, and the sword never to depart from his house; all these fate close to him, went neare his soule; besides his shame, to have his sin discovered to all the world, as appears by *Psalm 51*. Have not wee cause then to spend our time in feare, if hee dealt thus with *David*? and doe not say, that though he dealt thus with *David* offending of him, that yet he will not doe thus with me, for is he not a *Father that judgeth all his sonnes*, and that *without respect of persons*, as the *Apostle* saith? Consider also what he did to *Jacob* and *Rebecca* for consulting and agreeing to get the blessing by a lye, for though the thing shee went about was good and they had a warrant for it, and their end was good; yet they used ill meanes (a lye). But *God* met with them both for it, *Jacob* was therefore put to live twenty yeares from his Mothers house (whereas he should have staid Gods leisure, and not have beene too hasty for the accomplishment of that promise, for *he that believeth doth not make haste*: and so God promiseth riches and all good things to his children, as much as they can desire, but they must not make haste, that is their fault) and when he was coming home againe, what a feare was hee put to from *Esau*, that lye of his being the cause of their falling out! and how did *Rebecca* also for all that while want the comfort of a sonne shee loved, and had none to live with but *Esau*? And so *Moses* was dearer to God than any man upon earth, hee never spake with any face to face as with him, yet he

he would have slaine him in the Inne, for not circumcising his Child, and also because of that other sin at the waters of *Meriba*, he chuseth an affliction for him, wherein he most of all crossed his desires denying him to goe into the Land of *Canaan*, it may bee some small affliction in shew as this seemed to be, which yet pincheth sorely, and some great affliction on the contrary in bulke to others, that is not so to him that beares it; And thus he also deales with *Eli*, a zealous man (would any of us were so in these dayes) for when newes was brought that his sonnes were dead, and many of the people slaine, he was not so much troubled at that, as that the *Arke* of the Lord was taken, and this amazed him so as that he fell backward and brake his necke: you see the holinesse of the man, yet because he had preferred his sonnes before the Lord, did not governe them well, God did not onely thus take away his life, and of his sonnes, but the Priesthood also from his house for ever, and have not wee all cause to feare then? How did hee deale with the good Prophet that was slaine by a Lion, his fault that he beleevd another mans word, pretending that he had Gods Word, when hee had Gods Word expresly given to himselfe, this sinne was as the sin of *Eve* who beleevd the Divels word, when she had Gods Word expresly, and therefore let us when we have the Word of the Lord sticke close to it. And so however hee deale with *Gideon* a worthy man reckoned up among those worthies, *Heb. 11.* yet when he made an *Ephod*, see what judgement fel upon his children, *Iudg. 9.* and all his house was cut off.

These

These examples are usefull for you to consider, that you might know and feare the Lord, and the want of this is the cause of this remissnesse and loosenesse in our profession, and that we doe not so consider our waies. Saint *Paul* was an holy man, and one that stood in neere termes with *Iesus Christ*, yet feared exceedingly, *2 Cor. 5. Wee knowing the terror of the Lord perswade men*; And *Iob* that was very exact in his life, which appeares by the *31. Chap.* which Chapter is nothing else but an expression of the manner of his carriage, which was very exact, verse *23.* he gives this as a reason, *the punishments of the Lord were a terror to me*, and so in the *2. verse* the reason why he would not give liberty to his eyes to looke on a Maid, was for that hee considered, *what portion then shall I have with the Almighty?* and this feare of the Lord is needfull at this time, when God hath discovered himselfe to be angry with the Land, which is not onely for the grosse sinnes of wicked men, but the sinnes of the Saints also; It is your coldnesse, remissenesse and laxitude. I have two grounds for it, first in the *Revel. 2.* because *Ephesus was fallen from her first love*, therefore he would remove her *Candlesticke*, that is, the whole Church among them, carry them into Captivity, for I cannot see by the *Candlesticke* how only the Ministry should be ment; and so in the *Rev. 3.* because *Laodicea was neither hot nor cold*; therefore will I spue them out of my mouth, God would endure them no longer, and therefore you that thinke your estates the best, even you have had a hand in this plague, you thinke that other mens sinnes, the sinnes of wicked men

men are the cause of it, but God he knoweth, that they cannot pray and have no life in them, as you have; and though their sinnes also be a cause, and a maine cause, as appears by the *Amorites*, whose sinnes when full, God punished; yet I say they are yours also: And therefore, when there is an evident signe, that God hath a controversie with a Kingdome and the Churches, and a signe of his wrath is proclaimed from heaven, then every man must doe something; now feare the Lord, be zealous, repent and doe your first workes, begin now to mend your pace to heaven: and yet would onely there were a want of zeale among you, yea is it not in disgrace, is not a zealous man hooted at, as an Owle among us? this place, the excellency of it is exceedingly abated and eclipsed, the zeale of it is withered, the Lord is departed from us; learne to bee more zealous, and God will returne and cause you to flourish againe; for when God lookes upon a people, it is with them as with the earth in spring time, and when hee departs from them, they are as withered trees in winter, and where now is the zeale of former times, the Communion of Saints, the heating and whetting of one another, by mutuall exhortations; where is the boldnesse for the Lord? Those holy prayers, those former times are gone, the light of those times remaine, but not the heate, as also if wee looke backe upon that Generation of *Queene Elizabeth*; how are we changed! they were zealous, but here is another generation come in their roome, that is dead, and cold, and yet we have their light, but *ignis qui in illis calidus, in nobis lucidus tantum.*

But,

But, I beseech you, that you would now begin to stirre up your selves, especially in these times of fasting, when there must bee an extraordinary renewing of a mans covenant with God, that you would not now be so cold, and so dilute as you have beene; and seeing you have that you would have, and have desired long publike dayes of humiliation, that you would labour to spend them with all care and diligence and quicknesse of spirit, and to consider that the maine is to bee done at home with your selves, for the end of these dayes is, that you may be humbled, which you will never bee, till you consider your particular sinnes, get up early in the morning, for then your spirits are quicke, and so you will have a long time before you come to the congregation, and get you all that while alone, and consider your particular sinnes, and the holy duties you neglect, and renew your repentance, and enter into covenant; and then when you come hither you shall finde the word to have another manner of working upon you than it hath ordinarily.

If God be thus ready to punish his own children, and that thus sharply, it shewes the sinne of those that are fearelesse and carelesse, which provoketh God exceedingly, *Zach. 4. 15. I am very sore displeased with the carelesse heathen,* the heathens had sinnes enow besides to anger the Lord, yet this sinne did it above other sinnes, and it is not to be wondred at that it should, for it is a rule in Philosophy, and most true, that of all things that which provoketh a man most, is contempt, in so much that *Aristotle* maketh it the onely cause of anger, though therein

therein he is deceived, yet it is the maine ; we use to say *non respondere pro convictio est*, it is a signe of contempt not to answer againe, as when a man is chidden and stricken, & *non respondere* to goe by, as if hee tooke no notice of it at Gods hand, this is contempt. And thus a Father when he is angry with his son, or a Master with his servant, how hainously doth hee take it ! And so God who now hath discovered his wrath to the whole Land, and to every particular man in it, this neglect of him will cause his wrath to wax hot against us, but yet for the land in generall we have cause to hope that his wrath doth not so, but that God takes it well at our hands, that we are thus publickly assembled : but let mee say this, though, to every particular man, though God spare the Kingdome, yet if thou neglect him and bee carelesse, it will goe the worse with thee however. In the 50. *Psalme* when hee had expressed great threatnings in the former verses ; hee concludes with this, *Consider this, O all ye that forget God ! you that minde him not, least hee teare you in peeces, and there bee none to deliver you :* and so in the Prophet *Jeremy* 5. 12, 13, 14. verses, because you say *that his words are but winde, they shall be as fire, and you as drie wood, and they shall devour you.* This is the great fault of men, that they are ready to feare things which they should not feare, the creatures, poverty and discredit, but are backward to feare the Lord.

God sayes of the Church *Rev. 2. 12. Feare not the things thou shalt suffer ; what all the world feares, that doe not you feare, feare not the things you shall*

shall suffer, those things you ought not to feare, but feare those things you should doe, and who is afraid of them, least hee should provoke God in them? And so Christ saith, *feare not men*, no, not *those that have power of life and death* (if wee should feare any, it should be them) remember that was the commendation of *Moses*, *hee feared not the wrath of Pharaoh*; when you place your feare thus amisse, it becomes a snare to you; for it makes your hearts busie upon the creatures, when they ought to be set upon *the Lord*; but when your feare is placed upon *God*, it doth exceedingly helpe you, nothing more: to give you an instance or two, you shall finde *David* exceedingly stricke with the feare of the *Lord*, when *Ziglag* was burnt; no accident ever so amazed him: when hee fled before *Absolon*, hee bore it much better, yet that feare helped al, for it set him a worke to pray; so *Iehoshaphats* feare did also helpe him, when he heard of a great Army comming against him, it set him on worke to pray, and so turned away the Iudgement: and therefore things that you so feare, when your feare is placed on *God*, seldome come to passe, for that sets men on worke to prevent them, whereas evill feare brings the thing with it. *Saul* feared the Armies of the *Philistines* exceedingly, that made him seeke to the Witch, and this wrought his overthrow which hee feared: so *Iero-boam* feared the losse of his Kingdome, and that feare made him set up the Calves which lost him his Kingdome indeed; learne therefore to feare the *Lord*: nothing brings a Iudgement so much as the want of feare, security is the next doore to a Iudgement.

ment. *Lachish* was a secure people, and when the Army came against them, they and their City fell as Figs from a tree that are ripe, so did they fall in their enemies mouths, security is a fore-runner to every mans Iudgement, *Esay 66.2. To him that feares mee, saith God, and trembles at my words, to him will I looke to keepe him safe*; if not, I will neglect him as much as hee mee, I will have no eye to save him, as hee hath no eye to mee to cause him to feare and tremble. But you wil say, how may I bring my heart to feare the *Lord*? I answer, first pray to the *Lord* to strike your hearts with a feare of him, it is the worke of *God* to bring the feare of himselfe upon us, for it is hee that brings the feare of one man upon another, hee brought a feare upon all the Nations of the Land, when the people of Israel entered Canaan, much more the feare of himselfe, for the affections are such things as the *Lord* onely can meddle with, and therefore the Apostle saith, *You are taught of the Lord to love one another.*

It must be the *Lord*, that must put in such an affection into you, for his teaching is planting the affections, and so he is said to teach other creatures, that is, to give this or that inclination, and so the *Lord* is said to *fashion the hearts of men*; and then they cannot chuse but feare him: therefore goe to the *Lord*, and say, *Lord I am not able to feare thee*: and say, *Lord thou hast promised to give the Holy Ghost to those that aske it of thee, that worketh every grace*: if you would seeke him so, and seeke him importunately, though you had the securest hardest heart of any in the world, hee would at length

length teach you to feare him. *Ier. 40. I will plant my feare in your hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* Thus you see that God takes the doing of this to himselfe, it must be of his planting, and hee hath promised also you see to doe it.

This is not all, but there is something wee must doe our selves:

Therefore secondly, observe the Lords dealing with his, learne to know him in his wayes, and that wil be a meanes to cause thee to feare him: if any of his children sinne, he never lets them goe, for then should they thrive in evill, and prosper in sinne; but if they will bee meddling, they shall be sure to finde some bitternesse in the end. When a mans heart is set upon the creatures, there being thornes in them all, and therefore if hee will graspe too much of them, or too hard, hee shall finde it: Gods children are trained up so to it, that God will not let them goe away with a sinne; if they bee too adulterously affected, they shall finde a crosse in such a thing: you may observe this, in the 30 *Psalme*; there you may see the circle God goes in with his children; *David* had many afflictions, as appeareth by the 5 verse, *I cryed, and then God returned to me, and joy came*: what did *David* then? *I said in my heart, I shall never bee remooved*: his heart grew wanton, but God would not let him goe away so, *God turned away his face againe, and I was troubled*. At the 7 verse hee is you see, in trouble againe, well, *David* cryes againe, at the 8 and 10 verses, and then God turned his mourning into joy againe. And this to be his dealing, you shall finde it in all the Scriptures, but be-

cause we find this his dealing set so close together in this *Psalme*, therefore I name it. Therefore observe the wayes of the Lord to you, and they that are not acquainted with these his wayes, as yet in themselves, see what he hath done to others in al the world; in our neighbour Churches: when hee had given a bill of divorce to *Israel*, yet *Judah* had not feared: now when God hath stricken our neighbour Churches, doe you thinke he will take it well, if we be idle spectators: therefore when he hath stricken another place, learne to feare.

Vse 3.

If hee afflicts his owne children thus sharply, let them looke to themselves, that are not his; whether they bee grosse sinners, prophane persons, of whom there is no question; or mere civill men, and formal professors, in whom there is no power of grace: if hee bee thus hot against his owne Church, his anger will bee seven times hotter against you: it may bee longer deferred as his manner is, yet when hee strikes hee will strike you in the roote, not in the branches; and that so as he will not *Strike the second time*: Consider that in the 50 *Psalme*, that *he will teare you in peeces*; and you that are prophane ones, let mee say to you, as 1 *Cor* 10. 22. *Doe you provoke the Lord to anger? are you stronger than hee?* Those that lye in open prophanenes, and doe fight openly against the Lord, and have not so much as a shew of turning; you and those that are meerely civill, and yet lye in secret siones; that yet are in health, wealth and credit in the world; it is a signe that God meanes them no good, hee would not let his owne Garden goe so long unplowed.

And

And in the second place for professors, that doe not answer their profession in their lives, take heed, *for hee that is not with mee is against mee*; it may bee thou art no enimie, not very stirring in any evill way, but because thou art not with God in good earnest, because your hearts are not perfect, at the last day you will be found against him, **CHRIST** will come against you in good earnest as an enimie; and whereas all your hope lyes, that God is mercifull and **CHRIST** a Saviour, learne to know that this *Iesus*, whom you hope to bee saved by, will prove the sharpest enimie against you, *Kisse the Son lest hee bee angry*: the Sonne may bee angry, as hee who in *Revel. 2.* *hath his eyes like a flame of fire*, and his *feete like fine brasse* to tread you to powder; hee shall come against you that are formall: and know, that Iesus Christ is not onely a Saviour, but a Lord; that he came into the world to be a Prince, and *the government is upon his shoulders*; you forget that part of his office, half the end for which Christ came into the world, and if you would know what kind of Governor he is. *Ex. 23. 21. I wil send my angel with you* (saith God) that is Christ, *beware of him, and obey his voyce, & provoke him not, for my name is in him*: he is of the same spirit and disposition with his Father, and they are both alike affected to sinne; beware of him, he goes along with you, and he will not spare you, for the Lord hath put al the government upon him.

Let it not seeme strange, that he hath or should deale thus with his Churches abroad; what though the Candlestick be removed out of the *Palatinate*, because they were luke-warme, and false from their

Vse 4.

first love? what if he should doe it in *France*? what if in *England*? in the *Low-countries*? should it seeme strange to us? It is His manner so to doe; Hee removed *Iudah* and *Ierusalem* often out of their places; wee should not bee offended at it, if hee doth, or if hee should doe thus with us, as thinking that it is a signe that our religion is not the true religion, and that hee doth not love his Churches; yes those hee loves most hee soonest afflicts, for *Iudgement must begin at the house of God*, that is, hee lookes on all the world, as on *Europe* now, and where he seeth his house is, there hee beginneth with them, for hee is to use others to afflict them; and therefore he be- ginneth with them first. *Amos. 2. 2. You have I knowne of all the Nations, therefore will I afflict you* soonest and frequentliest, though not more deeply than others; for though the Church bee brought under water, yet shee shall rise againe. I speeke this, be- cause men are subject to be offended at it, And *Bel- larmine* I remember, makes that an argument, that theirs is the Church, because they have had so many victories against the Protestants, and our Church hath bin ever and anon downe, but by that argu- ment the captivity should not have lighted upon *Iudah's*, but upon *Nebuchadnezzars* people.

Doct 2.

The second Doctrine was, that *Though God send very sharpe afflictions upon his owne people, yet therein his kindnesse and compassions are exceeding great to- wards them*: hee calls them you see here, *my people*, as if he should have said, you are mine, and I can- not forget you; a man loves that which is his owne, much more God, who is all love. And this Do-
ctrine

Gods Compassion, to his people in affliction.

21

ctrine had need to bee added to the former.

Now the reasons and demonstrations of this are three.

I. Because he is exceeding slow to afflict, and exceeding long about it, ere he do's begin, and therefore he makes many offers often before he does it, as one that could finde in his heart not to doe it at all. *Psal. 78. 38.* It is said, *hee being full of compassion forgave their iniquity, yea many a time did hee call backe his anger*: when his hand was up, and he giving the blowe, hee called it backe againe, as one that could not finde in his heart to doe it; and when hee did it, *hee did not stirre up all his wrath*; hee let fall some droppes of it, but would not shed the whole shower of it; and hee giveth the reason of both, *for they are but flesh*; and indeed his primary scope is to shew mercy, and that hee afflicts, is but upon occasion; and therefore hee is provoked, and provoked much before hee doth it; As the Bee to give hony, it is naturall to it, but it stings but by occasion when it is provoked; and this wee see to bee true in God by experience, who suffers men, and suffers them long, they continue in their sinnes, and yet hee continues his mercies, and with-holds his Iudgements.

2 His compassion is shewn in susteyning them in their afflictions, and in helping them in the mid't of them, *Daniel 11. 33. 34.* when his people *should fall by the sword, and by the flame &c.* it is said they should bee *holpen with a little helpe*, that is, so much as would sustaine them, beare them up: the like wee have *Zach. 13. 9.* *I will bring a third part through the fire,*

202262

and they shall come out refined, as Gold and Silver is refined, loose nothing but their drosse, so as hee would sustaine them, hold them up. And this hee doth by doing of two things, ¹ by moderating their affliction, ² by so framing and fashioning their hearts, so as they shall bee able to beare them.

- ¹ Hee moderates them; they are *still in measure*, and not beyond their strength, *Revel. 2. 10.* saith Christ to the Church of *Smyrna*, *Feare none of those things which thou shalt suffer; behold Sathan shall cast some of you into prison, that you may bee tried, and you shall have tribulation ten dayes:* as if hee should have said, I wil moderate this persecution, and do measure out the time to you, but ten dayes and no more; and therefore feare not: so as you shall not have so much as Sathan would, for hee would never give over; nor so little as you would, for then you should not be afflicted at all. If you aske now what it is to be afflicted in measure? I answer, if afflictions lye so upon his children as to cause them to put forth their hands to wickednesse, then it is above measure, but if so as they never fret nor faint under it, it is not: now he hath promised, that he wil so accommodate afflictions, as they shall not worke so with his people, *Psalme. 125. 3.* *The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, least hee put forth his hand to iniquity;* it shall not bee so long as to cause a distemper in the spirit of them, so as they should not carry themselves in a meeke manner under it: I meane not so, but that at the first it may cause a bustling in their spirits, as it did in *Iob*, when it grew sharpe, and hee spake unadvisedly, yet not a substantiall

stantiall disquiet, hee came to himselfe againe. To this purpose let the *Psalme 129. 3,4.* bee compared with the former, *G O D* compares there the afflictors of his people to *plowers set to plow his ground*, (the *Babylonians* and all the other enemies were but Gods plowers) now they should not doe it, as to doe them any hurt, no more than for his advantage and his Churches, they should not goe a foote further, for then *God cuts their cords in sunder*, and when the traces are cut, then the plow stands still, goes not a jot further, let the horses doe what they will.

The second way of sustaining them is, in that he so fashioneth their hearts, as they shall be able well to beare it; and then though it be great, if they have strength to beare it, it is the lesse; A great burthen on a strong mans shoulders, is no more than a small one on a weake mans. Wee oft wonder that *G O D* should lay so great afflictions on his children, but wee doe not see their inward strength and ability they have to beare them.

Now first he fashioneth their hearts to pray, and not to murmur, and the greatest affliction it is nothing if they can but pray, in *Rom. 8. 26.* that is one comfort brought in among the rest, that sweetneth our afflictions, *that the Spirit helpeth our infirmities*, and teacheth us to pray.

He frameth their hearts to repent, and that they should not sinne against him, and if sinne bee not mingled with an affliction, it is not bitter, if a good conscience bee joyned with it: for then it is heavie, when it falls upon the shoulder out of joyn, or upon the fore place, and therefore *S. Paul* he cared not

for death or the prison, because hee had a *cleare conscience*, all his afflictions were nothing to him, for hee bare them with a whole shoulder ; sinne wounds the soule, and then affliction dropped in, causeth smart.

3.

Hee frames their hearts to patience, and so that keepes their spirit whole, so as they possesse their soules, and themselves : as on the contrary impatience takes the soule off the hinges, puts it out of it selfe : but whilest a mans spirit is strong and it selfe, it will beare its infirmities, but when impatient, it will beare nothing ; when therefore afflictions are thus mingled with prayers, and repentance, and a good conscience and patience, it is easie to beare them, and it is God mingles their cup thus. And as Christ said, *shall not I drinke of the Cup which my Father hath mingled ?* although the cup be bitter, yet the ingredients he puts in it, makes it sweete, God mingles a cup to them in another manner to them and to others ; See how hee mingled a cup to *Ahitophel*, it was no great thing in it selfe, it was but that disparagement in the rejection of his counsell, yet such an ingredient was put in, such an apprehension by Gods providence (for though God was not the author of it, yet he suffered Sathan to doe it) as that it brake his heart, and he hanged himselfe. See the contrary in *David*, when *Ziglag* was burnt, a great and suddaine affliction, yet hee bare it well, for he had comfort from the Lord, an ingredient with it which encouraged him in God, and so when he fled before *Absalom* his own sonne, a great and bitter affliction, yet he bare it with such a mind,

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as if he had beene in his bed asleepe, as appeares by the third *Psalmie*, which was made upon that occasion, when tenne thousand were encamped against him; yet hee feared no more, then if he had had never an enemy in the world. *I will lay mee downe and sleepe, &c.*

Thirdly, his compassion is shewn in bringing them through, and giving them a good issue and comfortable fruit of all; as appeares by that place of *Zacha. 13. 9.* Hee carried them through the fire, and fined them thereby as Gold, led them out, and caused them to lose nothing but their drosse; or as the Wheat loseth nothing in the winnowing, but the chaffe. There is an excellent place for this purpose in *Esay 27. 8.* In measure in the branches thereof thou wilt debate with it (so some read it.) God promiseth in the former part that *Israel* should grow like a fruitfull tree, and flourish; and though he afflicted them, yet it should not be so, as hee afflicteth others, hath hee smitten him, as he smote those that smote him? no, hee smote them in the root, but him in the branches, so as he should grow the more by it; God compares himselfe to a man that loppeth his tree, but medleth not with the root or body of the tree, but with the branches onely, and that just so farre as neede was, and where they should bee cut, and that in season, and at the just time, that it may grow the more; for this is to doe it in measure: and this is no more than necessary to make the tree shoot the more; and it were spoyled, if hee did not deale thus with it. Now hee smites others at such a time, as they are most unfit for it, and

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and that in the roote, so as hee causeth them to wither, they are loosers by it ; as appeares by that wicked King *Ioram*, 2 *King*. 6. 33. *This euill is of the Lord, and what should I waite on the Lord any longer? and by that of Abaz*, 2 *Chron*. 28. 22, &c. Then in time of distresse *Ahab* yet trespassed more against the Lord : this was that King *Ahaz*, this was the end of that affliction.

Object. But some good soule will object and say, I doe not finde this fruit of my afflictions.

Answ. It may be thou doest not for the present ; but stay a little till God hath made an end, and thou shalt see that affliction which thou thoughtest most sharpe, and for which thou sawest no reason, and by which for a while you saw you got no good ; yet when the Lord hath made an end and put all together, then I say thou shalt find thy worst takings, thy worst condition profitable and usefull to thee ; In the time of winter when the trees wither, an unwise man would wonder to see such a spoile, but when the spring comes, you know the benefit of it ; you should not have had such a spring but for such a winter : and so those varieties of afflictions and crosses which God leadsthee through, those sins, those puttings backe which we thinke can no way bee advantageous to us, they ever in the end will bring forth a spring time, for all things worke together for good. Iudge not by one particular, but stay till God hath put all together, and thou shalt see it is for good. Thence it is that Saint *Iames* would have us, *Iames* 1. 2. *when we fall into diuers temptations, to count it exceeding great joy, that is, hee*
 dot

doth not say, when you goe in step by step, but when you are precipitated, fall all on the suddaine, and are plunged into them ; so the word in the originall signifieth. And secondly, not into one, but into all sorts, into divers afflictions at once ; affliction in Estate, Body, Wife, Children, one upon the necke of another : yet rejoyce, and not onely so, but be exceeding glad, as glad as a Merchant man is to see his ships come from the Indies laden with riches, and full of treasure ; so beneficiall should they be in the end. Now except they did alwaies bring home such treasure, and proved not in the issue exceeding good and profitable, he could not have desired them thus to rejoyce.

Now if you aske the reasons why it is so, that God deales thus with his Children in afflictions : I answer out of the text.

First sayes he, they are my people, they are his owne, and therefore hee is full of bowels of compassion towards them, as a man is to his own child, because it is his, *Hos. 11. 8.* thou art mine, and I cannot deale with thee as with a stranger, for *my bowels are turned within me*, as it is there, when it came to the casting away of his child, he cannot do it. So, *1 Sam. 12. 23.* The Lord will not forsake you, for you are his people. And so also, *Micah. 7. 18.* who is a god like unto our God, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of thine heritage ? there lies the reason ; they are a remnant, they are cholen out of the rest of the world, and to them hee is so mercifull, as there is none like unto him, it would make a man stand amazed at it.

They

2.

They are a *people called by his name* : as hee hath chosen them to bee his, so it is taken notice of that they are his, and he hath owned them, his name is upon them by profession, and therefore hee will spare them, *for his name sake*, because of them that stand by and take notice of them : for if hee should deale hardly with them, none would serve him; for when servants are hardly dealt withall, who will serve such masters ? And this argument *Moses* uses, *Numb. 14. Lord spare them* (sayes he) and if it be, but *for thy Names sake, for what will all the Nations say ?* that either thou art such a God as art unkind, and wouldest not save them, or a weake God, and couldest not.

object.

But you will say, wee see the contrary by daily experience, wee see great and sore afflictions befall Gods people, yea, it may bee some here of his will say, they have felt and tasted of great afflictions.

Answ.

I answer, you may mistake in afflictions, they are not alwayes such afflictions as they seeme to be : for as we say of the Sunne, *Sol non patitur eclipsin, sed videtur tantum pati*, the Sunne keeps his light even in eclipses firme and cleare, so often those afflictions which you thinke great, are nothing at all in themselves, they seeme so to us onely : so the *Apostle, 2 Cor. 6.* wee seeme to bee men sorrowfull, yet alwaies rejoycing, seeme to be poore, but possessing all things, all was nothing to *Paul* : for affliction lyes onely in the apprehension, and so many of those grievous afflictions and tortures which Martyrs and the Children of God endured though to us they seeme great, yet I am periwaded were nothing to many of them.

But

But thou wilt say, this is not my case; I feele, I am sure the sting of it. Object.

I answer thee, first, that God layes it not on thee, till thou hast neede: the Physitian knowes the body of the patient better than himselfe, and the sou'e hath more intricate diseases than the body, and hee sees thy secret pride, security, &c. it may be when thou seeest them not, as *Hezekiah* did not; so that when thou seeest no reason of such a sharpe affliction as purging physicke for thee, he doth and does not administer it but when there is need. Answ.

And secondly, he doth not goe a jot beyond thy need; and this will appeare by the opening of two excellent similitudes, *Esay* 28. (for all the wits in the world cannot finde out better expressions than the Word hath; if we had eyes to see the glory of them) from the 24. verse downeward; First, *doth the Plowman plow all day to sowe? and open and breake the clods of his ground, when hee hath made plaine the face thereof? doth he not cast abroad the fetches? scatter the cummin, the wheat, and the rie? for the Lord hath instructed him to doe so.* The husbandman hee tells you, plowes not but where he meanes to sowe, and to have an harvest, and the plowe goes no longer then till the clods be broken, and layes he, God hath given him this discretion; and therefore shall not God have the same and use the same himselfe? dost thou thinke that thou art plowed longer then thou needest? it is but till the clods, thy stiffe spirit bee broken; and whereas thou maiest thinke thy heart soft enough, it may be so for some grace, but God hath seeds of all sorts to cast in the wheat and

202262

and the rie ; and that ground which is soft enough for one, is not for another. And againe, secondly when it comes to harvest, to some maturity, he hath to thresh it with divers kinde of instruments (which is the second similitude) ver. 27. *The Fitches are not threshed with a threshing instrument, neither is the Cart wheele turned about upon the Cummin, but they are beaten out with a staffe and a rod ; but breadcorne, wheat is bruised with the wheele,* because hee should not alwaies bee threshing it. So God beholdeth every mans strength, and knowes what affliction is most suitable for him, he findes out a fit instrument for every graine ; his end is but to drive thee out of the huske of thy circumcision, of some lusts whereof some fits more close to the heart then other : and as the wheat and the huske fits closer together than in other graines, and therefore the wheele goes over it, and when it is threshed enough, and God hath unloosed the heart and the sinne, the huske and the wheate, he doth it no longer : now saies he, *this is from the Lord, who is wonderfull in counsell and excellent in working ;* and therefore as when you see an husbandman doe so with his ground and graine, you judge him a wise man in doing so, so also is God therein.

object.

But you will say, for all these good words and setting it forth thus, wee are sure, and see and feele by experience, that the Saints alwaies fare as ill as the worst, when generall afflictions come, plague, sword, or captivity, they are swept away by these as well as others, and what afflictions are there, goe through the sonnes of men, that fall not upon the Saints as well as upon others ? For

Ans.

For answer, it is true, those Deluges of afflictions which over-whelme whole Countries take away one as well as another, yet there is a difference, as *Jer. 24.* all were carried into the same captivity by the same King, but yet they were carried in divers baskets, the bad in one basket, the good in another; which shewes the condition of the one was different from the other: First, the Lord knowes the *good figs*, his eyes are upon them for good, to see that no hurt should befall them, that was hurt indeed; and secondly, againe he did but send them into Captivity, as one is sent of an errand, but the other are led as a condemned man to the jaile; thirdly, hee would bring them againe, when they had done the businesse for which they were sent, when they had humbled themselves, sanctified his name more; many the like ends the Lord hath: but the other he utterly destroyed, and they never returned.

But will some say, the afflictions that I endure are of an extraordinary nature, never any was so afflicted as I (as the manner of man is to complaine) there is a peculiarity in mine, and it is not one but many, and these for a long time have layen upon mee.

Object.

I answer, it is true, they are often of an extraordinary nature, and there is good reason for it; for a small affliction would not bring thee home to God, it is not a little head-ach, a scratch with a pin that drives a man to the Physitian; but such a disease as a man apprehends death in, makes a man seeke out for helpe: and the reason why; first, these afflictions are
many

Ans.

202262

many is, ¹ because thou hast many diseases to bee healed, lusts of divers sorts, and thou must have diversity of afflictions applyed to them; and againe ² if God should not change afflictions, thy affliction would grow familiar; and as Physicke when it is made familiar to the body workes not, so would not those afflictions: and ² they are also often long, because some sinnes sticke close, and are not easily got off, the staine in some sinkes deeper, and requires a great deale of scouring. *Dan. 11. Many shall fall by the Sword, Famine, &c.* their trialls were of many kinds and long, that they might bee made white, into which yet they should not fall nor continue in, if men would bee scoured and made white sooner. I have stood longer upon this and the opening of it, because either it hath or will bee of much use one day to many of us: and seeing we know not what we are reserved for, it is good to treasure up these things, that wee may know the wayes of God afore hand, and so beare what comes the better, for it is ignorance that makes afflictions so unsupportable when they come. Wee will come to the uses.

Use 1.

Learn hence not to bee discouraged whatsoever thy case bee, whether thou hast beene afflicted in name by reproaches, so as thou thinkest, thou shalt never get thy credit againe; or in body by diseases, that thou shalt never have thy health againe, or in soule by doubts, that thou art in such an estate that thou shalt never bee raised againe, Remember the exceeding great kindnesse of the Lord, and know whatsoever thine afflictions bee, hee is able easily to scatter them: this I speake, because as men in prosperity

prosperitie doe thinke, it will alwayes continue, and
to morrow will bee as today, and much more abundant;
so in affliction, that it will never bee otherwise.
what unfaithfulnesse is this! are not *all times in Gods*
hands? as *David* sayes *Psalms. 31.* hee that alters the
weather, hee that turnes the Winter into Summer:
It is a storme now, and halfe an houre after the Sun
shines; all in the weather, so such alterations is God
able to make in mens estates: and comfort thy selfe
with this, it shall lie no longer on thee, then there
is neede, the plaister shall not lie a jot longer than
the sore is a healing. If it were sooner healed, it
would fall off sooner; but then it shall fall off alone;
though' *sorrow bee in the evening, yet joy shall come in*
the morning; because the anger of God never lasteth
but for a while; and the reason is given *Mica 7. 8.*
for mercy pleaseth him: take him alwayes when hee
is angry with his children, and there is but a short
brunt of it, his constant course is otherwise, for
mercy pleaseth him: now that which a man delights
in hee will bee doing long, hee can hardly bee taken
off from it: as if it greived him to doe otherwise:
when therefore it is long I say, it is *per accidens*, as
when thy heart is harder than ordinary; for some
are more stubborne than others. Ah, but thou wilt
say, this of mine is a great affliction, and I know not
how it should bee helped, unlesse the Lord should
worke miracles. It may bee it is so; and indeed
when God will send an affliction, all the world can
not keepe it off, In *Zach. 1.* there were *four* *hornes*,
did beset the children of *Israel* to afflict them, so as
which way soever they went and would have fled,

one would have met them, whether to the East or to the West &c. no way left to escape, no evasion; for when God will afflict, hee will afflict, and there shall bee no doore to goe out at; else it were not an affliction: for what matter is it for a man to bee in a smoaky house, if he hath a doore to goe out at? but yet what doe these horns serve for but to push them home to the Lord? and though a man cannot scape them, yet there is this comfort, that though those horns be as strong as the horns of an Vnicorne, so as all the world cannot knock them off, yet when they have pushed them to the Lord, then the Prophet saw 4 Carpenters, and wherefore came those Carpenters? to knock off every horne, and to cast them out, so that every nation was frayed away, that was against *Judah*; not the *Assyrian*, nor *Babylon*, nor none of them left: so that as when God will afflict a man, nothing can hinder him, so also when the Lord wil scatter the affliction againe, and will raise a man, nothing shall hinder neither, he wil doe it be it never so great. Be not discouraged then: what though the storme grow great and violent? one word of his mouth will allay and still both stormes and windes, as in *Mark. 5.* one word did it: so take the most grievous disease that thou hast long lyen under, and which thou thinkest thou shalt never recover, yet one word wil rebuke it: take the worst and bitterest and powerfulllest enemy of the Church, such as *Haman*, if God speake but a word to him, as hee did to *Laban*, *hurt not this man*, hee cannot hurt thee; one word of the Lord *Iesus* tames them all; onely bring faith with thee. *Mark. 4. 40, 41.* In the great
 storme

storme why did you feare, oh, you of little faith, (saith Christ to his Disciples, when they were so exceedingly troubled) as if he had said; It is not the greatnesse of this storme that breeds this feare, but the littlenesse of your faith. So when all the people murmured at the red Sea, what was the reason that Moses was quiet all that while when they murmured? Stay (saith he) a while, and you shall see the salvation of God: the reason of the difference was, Moses believed, they did not.

So as the trouble comes not from the greatnesse of the affliction, but the littlenesse of your faith: when therefore afflictions shall come, bee not, bee not discouraged, loose not your selves, but possesse your selves with patience: keepe this as a sure conclusion against all objections, that God will bee mercifull to his people.

Is the Lord then so full of pitie and bowells to his owne people? Learn thou to come to the Lord, when you have offended him: If indeed God had so hard an heart as would never relent, then when you had sinned, you might goe some whither else for comfort; but now come againe unto the Lord, as being assured of good successe: this use wee see made of it by Samuel in the like case to the people of Israel. 1, Sam. 12. When the people had committed that great sinne, wherein as he told them, they had not onely cast away him, but the Lord; and God had declared his wrath against them in storms from heaven, in the time of the latter harvest: yet at the 20. verse sayth Samuel; Feare not, ye have done all this wickednesse, yet turne not aside from following the

vs 27

202262

Lord; and hee giveth two reasons. 1. Because all other things they would go to, *would not profit them*, they were *vaine*. Secondly, because that *the Lord will not forsake His people for His great Names sake, because it hath pleased Him to make you His people*; as if he had said, I would not have you lessen the sinne, seeke out excuses (as indeed that is our fault in such cases) no, that is not the way, you have committed a monstrous transgression, yet forsake not the Lord. *Samuel* said this, because that which keepes men off from the Lord is discouragement; for many a man, if hee had (it may bee) a voice from heaven that would assure him, if he came in, his finnes would be pardoned; I doe not thinke but they would come in though they love their finnes well; But the maine thing that keepes them off, is, men doe not thinke God so ready to receive and pardon them. Now therefore (sayes *Samuel*) you are his people, and the Lord cannot forsake his owne: let a man have a child of his owne, even when it is young and troublesome, and nothing pleasant in it, yet because it is his owne, his affections will not off from it, yea his affections will hold on, although when it is growne up, it provokes him an hundred times, because it is his owne. Now if they should aske how it comes to passe that they are his? *Samuel* tels them, because it *pleased him to make you his people*; there is no other reason can bee given of it; so that if any of the children of God looking upon all the world lying in wickednesse, and should aske the reason why I should be in this good condition rather then they, there is no other then that it pleased God to make

make him so, G O D loves for no merits, which should teach us to looke out of our selves, lesse into our hearts in this case, and more to the Attributes of God, to returne in *Jeremy 3*. God sayes there, It is true indeed, that if you come to any man in the world when his wife hath played the harlot, will hee receive her againe? no, a mans heart in this case cannot relent, hee hath not mercy enough, his heart is too narrow, *But thou hast played the harlot many a time, yet returne to mee*, saith G O D; for looke how much larger Gods heart is then a mans, so much larger are his mercies.

If God bee thus exceeding mercifull and pittifull, this should leade men to repentance: there is that in the thing that leades you, so *Romans 2. 4.* when either God expresseth his mercies towards us by his behaviour and mercifull dealings with us, or causeth his Ministers to offer mercies unto us, it leades to repentance. It hath indeed a contrary effect almost in all in the world; for whom doe not Gods mercies leade from him rather then to him? but take heede lest you *turne the grace of God into wantonnesse*, which yet men ordinarily doe. The more favour, the more meanes they have enjoyed, the more wanton they grow, that is, the more bold, losing their respect to God; even as a child is apt to doe when his father carries himselfe kinde towards him, he cannot beare it, he hath not the discretion to consider, that it should leade him to obedience, but growes bold and wanton. And you should also make this use of mercies, that the meditations of them should stirre up your hearts to a

202262

more kindly sorrow for your finnes, to thinke that you have deserved to bee cut off long agoe, and that you have committed such finnes, for which many are in hell long since. God expects this at your hands; and let us make this use of it in these dayes of humiliation, the maine worke whereof is to humble your selves; and wee are to labour to humble you, not only by denouncing Gods judgements, but by expressions of his mercies also.

*A digression concerning Fasting to
the occasion.*

THere is a double manner of doing this dutie, one wholly publick, which should bee from morning till night in publike by the whole land, that all together might confesse and humble themselves for the finnes of it; which is more extraordinary. But secondly, as for these dayes which are kept from weeke to weeke thus, it is well ordered, that the time is so limited for these publicke exercises, as that there is time left for the private: for the businesse of particular humiliation goes forward better then, and these publicke exercises tend but to that end, and what is the meanes without the end be attained? that is, that *every man should mourne apart*: so *Zach. 12.* when it was a businesse of mourning, every family did it *apart*, and the wives *apart*: the wife and the husband are the nearest, and if any should bee together, one would thinke they should; and yet they must bee then apart: and the reason is, because nothing humbleth so much as particular
finnes

finnes, those wound the heart, which in publicke are not so much confessed, but in generall onely; but when you are every one in private, then you may consider what your lusts, your actions have beene, and the circumstances of them; then you may search your hearts and wayes, looke backe and reflect upon your selves; and that is the maine businesse and duties of these dayes. Some of you it may bee, will say; I know not how to spend my time in private, when I am from the Church: but consider, hast thou not committed many finnes? consider them, canst thou not speake and confesse them? and say, Lord I confesse I have fallen backe into this againe and againe. But secondly when you have done this, seeke reconciliation and beg it earnestly, which the heart will doe when it is touched with the sence of sinne, and the enumeration of them will worke your hearts to it; when you see the multitudes, the circumstances, the aggravations of them; and because this is the greatest of all your requests, therefore you must bee the most earnest in it; and therefore God doth purposely withhold assurance often, to teach men, what it is to be reconciled to him; and fasting serves to intend your prayers, that they may be the more earnest. Thirdly renew your covenants also, consider what finnes you are most inclined to, and what occasions draw you most to those finnes, and vow against them. Consider what good duties you have slighted most, and that your hearts are most apt to faile in; and promise better obedience. Fourthly, not onely make a promise, but labour to bring your hearts to

bee willing to leave those finnes in good earnest, and to performe those duties; and when the heart is strongly byassed any way, it is no easie matter to get an inward willingnesse; you must therefore have much reasoning with your hearts to bring them to it. Fifthly when they are brought into a good temper, they are easily subject to bee distempered againe; our affections shoote too farre into worldly businesse: your love, your feare, your griefe is subject to bee too much in some thing, and it is not easie to bring the soule backe againe; you must therefore take a great deale of paines with your hearts.

That which is said of Ministers, *fullones animarum*, fullers of mens soules, that is every man now to be himselfe, to wash out the staines of his heart, and to make his soule whiter, as it is, *Dan. 11.* and that will move God either not to bring afflictions, or to remove them: and therefore *clense your hearts from all pollution of flesh and spirit*, and know that to get staines of a deepe die out will cost a great deale of paines, you must scoure till your soules ake againe, and though it cause the skinn to come off, and if you do the worke your selves thus, and plow your owne hearts, God shall not neede to doe it by afflictions; therefore doe it, and give not over till you have done it, and have brought your hearts to be thoroughly humbled for them, for that is a great meanes to doe it. What else is the meaning of that in *Iames 4.* *Clense your hearts yee sinners, &c.* but how should we doe it, would some say? *affl Et your selves and mourne, and let your laughter be turned into mourning*: be content to sit alone, get out of company,

company, and not to take your former liberties, and mourne and humble your selves, and doe it constantly : for it is not *bowing downe the head for a day* which God regards ; but let sorrow abide in your hearts ; it is continuance that God regards : doe it, and doe it to purpose, for the want of this, is the reason of the coldnesse and remissenesse in our profession, namely, that we are not throughly and constantly humbled, it is the ground of every grace and the growth of it. What seede is sowne in a heart broken in peeces, thrives and prospers, but all instructions falling upon an heart not broken will bring forth no fruit. If you were humbled, wee should finde wonderfull fruit of our Ministry. Doe this therefore but one day, and you will be the fitter for it the next : sorrow should bee as a spring that runnes a long constantly from day to day. The sorrowes of many are but as land-floods ; and take heed, how the continuance of this duty from weeke to weeke, thus make you slacken your course herein, suffer not your hands to faint. When these duties are new, you are apt to do much ; but when a while continued, to be perfunctory in them. And let not any man complaine that hee loseth a dayes worke ; for is there any worke so necessary as the salvation of the soule ? neither complaine, that a dayes study is lost, for is there any excellency to the saving image of God stampt on the heart ?

We are hence to bee exhorted to chuse the Lord *Vse 4.* for our God, when you heare hee is so mercifull a God ; for no man ever served the Lord, but he first made choyce of him to be his Master. Every man
when

202262

when hee comes to yeares of discretion, and to bee master of himselfe, adviseth with himselfe what course he should take, whether he should serve God or the world. Now all the Saints of God have made this distinct choyce; wee will serve the Lord, and goe to no other. *Moses* when both stood before him, the pleasures of *Egypt* on the one hand, and God and his people with their afflictions on the other, hee chose the latter before the former, *Heb. 11. 25.* So *David* sayth he did, *I have chosen the way of truth, thy Iudgements have I laid before mee, Psal. 119. 30.* for to chuse, is, when a thing lyes before a man, and he considers and takes it. So *Ioshua*, *I and my house will serve the Lord.* Now I exhort you, that seeing you are to make some choyce, that seeing God is such a God, so exceeding mercifull, that you would make this choyce, let him be your God; for what moves a man to make choyce of one course of life rather then another? the ground of it is some happinesse that he seekes: when men consider what makes most for their happinesse, that they will chuse.

Now if men were perswaded that to chuse God were the best way for happinesse, they could not but chuse him; and surely if God be so exceeding kind and mercifull a God, their chiefest happinesse cannot but be found in him alone; and surely there is no husband, no friend so loving as he, no father so kinde as he, so tender hearted; hee goes beyond all the sonnes of men, for love and tenderneesse and kindnesse: for if there be any kindnesse in any man or woman, the Lord hath put it in him. That naturall

turall ~~sojyn~~ and affection in Parents, &c. is not a drop to that Ocean, not as a beame to the Sunne, to what is in him; And if the kindnesse in them be an excellency, then surely it is in him; And if the Lord hath commanded us to be amiable, and *full of bowells and goodnesse, and easie to be entreated*, as being a part of that his image, and that holy frame of heart which ought to be in us, is it not then much more in himselfe? but that I may not urge a bare exhortation without some reason; Consider how mercifull the Lord hath beene to us, and how gracious he is to them that make choyce of him: for first hee giveth them the comfort of his presence, and there is no comfort like that. For joy and comfort is nothing else but the agreeablenesse of a thing to a mans minde, *applicatio convenientis convenienti*: Now there is nothing that better agreeth with mans minde then the presence and face of God; for lusts and pleasures are the diseases of the soule, and the pleasures that agree to them are the destruction of it. Besides, when thou art reconciled to him, thou art out of all debt and danger, hee will set thy soule at rest, that was restless before; And besides when thou hast the Lord to be thy God, thou hast one to whom thou mayest goe, and unboosome thy selfe, to advise withall, when thou canst not goe to any in the world; one thou maist fetch comfort from when thou seest no comfort no where else; thou maist runne to him as to a refuge, when thou art overwhelmed with oppositions, slanders and ill reports; and besides all this, and the glory which we shall have in heaven, consider what there is that thy

202262

thy heart can desire, that hee will not doe for thee ; if thou hast any businesse to doe, God will doe it better for thee, then thou canst for thy selfe, *the Lord workes all our workes in us and for us, Esay 26. 12.* Art thou a Scholler, and hast studies to bring to perfection ? a tradesman, and hast enterprises to bring to passe ? art in straights ? he will be entreated of thee to doe all for thee, if thou goe to him, and hee will bring it better to passe then thou canst with all thy policy. Againe, Art thou fallen into poverty, into sicknesse, into disgrace ? thou shalt finde him exceeding kinde, when thou art sicke, hee will be carefull and watchfull over thee, this *David* acknowledges, *Psal. 31. 7. I will be glad and rejoyce in thy mercy, for thou hast considered my trouble, and hast knowne my soule in adversities :* when others overlooke and forget thee in adversity, as the *Butler* did *Ioseph*, hee will not, but take care of thee. Againe, if thou beest persecuted, and hast enemies to deale with (as who hath not that liveth godlily ?) so that (as *David* sayth of himselfe) *my soule is among Lions ;* yet thou shalt finde God stand by thee, as hee did by *Saint Paul* to deliver thee out of the mouth of those *Lions :* thou shalt finde him to bee as a rocke, as a place of defence, to shield thee against them and all their incursions, so that all their plots and malice shall not hurt thee. *David* had often tryall of God in this. Againe, if thou doest want any thing, he hath promised to grant whatsoever thou shalt aske. But if thou shalt say, I provoke him day by day ; yet know that he is exceeding kind, and will passe by many infirmities, for hee knowes

knowes whereof we are made; one ill turne causeth not him, as it doth men, to forget what was done before, *the Lord keepeth for us the sure mercies of David*, that is, such mercies as the Lord shewed *David*, and not to him only, but to all his posterity, so as he will not onely be a God to thee, whilst living, but when thou art dead, to thy seed also. Such a God you shall finde him; therefore take him for your God and for your husband. If men knew him, they would chuse him; as Saint *Paul* said to *Agrippa*, *I would that thou wert altogether as I*, that is, if thou did'st know him as I doe, and his service, thou wouldest not be halfe a Christian, but one altogether: doe but try if thou likest not his service, thou mightest leave it. But the Saints who have experience of both conditions holding out may be an argument of his kindnesse unto all his: and this also should move us to chuse him for our master.

As the other use was to those without to chuse the Lord, so this use is to all those that are already in the covenant, to exhort them to confirme themselves in their choyce to bee more and more well perswaded of him, that so they may love the Lord more and more, and cleave faster to him. One that is married may love her husband well, and yet by seeing more and more the excellencies that are in her husband, shee may bee more confirmed in her choyce: In all afflictions labour to thinke well of God, and ill of your selves. This was the praise of *David*, he alwaies laboured to extoll God in all, and still hold this conclusion, *yet God is good to Israel*: we are apt to faile much this way, we are ready

Vse 4.

202262

dy to thinke that God deales hardly with us and his people : but we must learne to correct this error, and to have a good conceit of him, to labour to extoll his mercy. But this we will not doe, till we see these two things: First Gods exceeding great kindnesse ; Secondly, our exceeding rebellions: you looke onely on Gods dealings, and so are ready to thinke that God hath dealt hardly with you, but never thinke how abominable your carriages have beene to him. But learne to thinke, that however he is a God full of bowels, even in your worst condition, and that you have deserved worse at his hands, that he is exceeding kinde: labour to thinke of this for your selves and also for the Churches. God hath beene mercifull to it in all ages, and is so still ; so he saith, *I have beene her habitation* (that is a house for the Church to dwell safely in) *from one generation to another*, from *Abrahams* time to the time they were in *Aegypt*, and there I was their habitation, and so in the wildernesse, and so in all the times under the Iudges, and so to our times, looke on the Church when it was in the worst condition, take the Church of God, even when it deemed to be cut off, as in that great massacre in *France*, yet then was the Lord an habitation to it, a company was kept alive, that grew greater then the former. So the Church in *Queene Maries* time, he suffered the storme to overtake them a little, but it was soone blowen over, he was an habitation to keepe off the storme from destroying them, and so he hath been, and will be to *Bohemia* and the *Palatinate*, but so he hath beene found to be to our Church above all the rest.

rest, for our Nation hath been like *Gideons Fleece*; when all others about us, have beene wet and wallowed in blood, we have been dry: therefore labour to see how good God is, and how base we are, and take heed of abusing his kindnesse, lest he make this Nation wet with blood, when all others shall be dry, and we come to have warre, when all the rest have peace: the way to continue his favours is to remember them and to humble our selves before him in thankfulnessse. Thus much of this Doctrine.

The next may be this third Doctrine: *The Lords Name is called upon his people*, that is, they are called by his Name: for the opening of this poynt, we must know first, that it is the Lord that putteth his Name upon them; for who durst take this honour, but those upon whom the Lord himselfe pleaseth to bestow it? this is no small thing; where God puts his Name, it brings something with it.

Doct. 3.

So as secondly, it is not an empty title, *Titulus sine re*, but there is a reality in it; for where God gives his Name to any man or people, there he bestowes himselfe, and all he hath is theirs, because they are Gods, *1 Cor. 3. ult.* As an husband when he bestowes his name upon his wife, then he also giveth himselfe to her. Now in the Scripture the Lords Name and the Lord himselfe are put one for another, so that it is no small priviledge to have the Lords Name called upon us.

2

And to open this further; let us consider, who they are yet that are called by anothers name amongst men.

First,

202262

The Lords Name is called upon his people.

First, wives are called by the name of their husbands.

Secondly, children by the name of their Parents.

Thirdly, Temples are called by their names to whom they are dedicated.

Lastly, they that addict themselves to some man to follow his opinion, are called by his name. As the *Platonists, Aristotelians, Ramists, &c.* from their masters.

In the same respects, those that are called by Gods Name are such as are married to him, and that are borne of him (for they are his children) and all such as are his Temples dedicated to his service. Lastly, all such as are addicted to follow him, as *Ioshua was*, who said, *I and my house will serve the Lord*, and as *Iacob was*, *thou shalt be my God, and I will serve thee*; all these are called by the Name of the Lord, and the Lord is called by their names: so he is called *the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Iacob, &c.* so that it seemes that there is (as it were) a certaine match betweene them, a mutuall agreement and relation, as there is betweene a husband and a wife, a father and a sonne; so if thou beest one who is married to Christ, and hee hath changed thy heart, and begotten thee anew by his Word, and art dedicated to his service as his Temple; then thou art called by his Name.

Reas.

And the onely reason of this is, because he hath chosen thee, there is no other; when he cast his eyes upon all the earth, he chose thee out, to have his Name called on thee; as it is said of the Temple

ple at *Ierusalem*, that he chose that place rather then any other, to put his Name there: and there is the same reason why his Name is called upon a whole Church; as when he looked on *Europe*, he chose out the reformed Churches to put his Name there; and where the Lord puts his Name, there he dwels, so as the one is put for the other, either to say, he chose a place to dwell in, or that his Name is called upon it, they are all one. There are two places where God dwelleth, *Isa. 57. 15. thus sayth the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose Name is holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, &c.* The highest heavens and the lowest hearts are Gods chiefest dwelling places. He hath indeed other places, he dwelleth elsewhere, but in these two he manifesteth a peculiarity of his presence, and that peculiarity is of the presence of his grace and comfort; for he saith in the same verse, *to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite one*; hee reveales himselfe to these, and his secrets, which are hid from all the rest, and hee fills their hearts with joy and comfort.

If we be such as beare the Name of God, then let us learne to be *Obedient* unto him, to give up our selves unto him; for so much is intimated by this, that we are called by his Name, and therefore we are said in Scripture to be *baptized into the Name of Iesus Christ*; that is, we doe by our baptisme profess thus much, that we give our selves to his service; for to beare his Name is to beare our owne names no more, that is our owne natures no more.

E

A

vse 1.

202262

A man that is called by the Name of the Lord is no more *Sui juris*, his owne man; As a man that giveth himselfe to serve another, how much he serverth himselfe, so much he wrongeth that man. And the reason why a Wife leaves her owne name, it is to shew that she is to give up her selfe to the obedience of her husband, she is not mistresse of her selfe, not free, she depends on her husband as the Ivie on the tree, shee hath no root of her owne to rest on, but dependeth on him. So we having taken the Name of the L O R D upon us, wee must thinke that we are no longer free, we leave our owne names, we must have no more root of our selves, but of the Lord; we must have no will of our owne, his will must be ours: therefore, yee that beare the Name of the Lord, let it not be in profession onely, but doe that thing which the Name requireth, that is, follow no more your selves, but follow God. A Wife before had the name of her father, but when she is married, as she leaves that name, so she leaves father and mother also to cleave to her husband; if her Parents command one thing, and her husband another, she leaves her *father and mother and cleaves to her husband*: so as leaving father and mother, implies leaving to beare affection to them, in comparison to her husband, and thus must you doe to Christ, as you have it in *Luke 14. 26*. If thou wouldest be matched to the Lord, thou must be divorced from all things else in the world, from every thing that is very neare and deare to thee: father and mother, sonnes and daughters are deare, but you must *hate them*

them all for Christs sake, or you cannot be his Disciples: yea, he that is married to the Lord, must hate and deny his owne soule; when his owne soule desires one thing, and Christ another, he must deny it and be divorced from himselfe, and take no roote from himselfe, but from the Lord, because he is able to sustaine him. Wives are not bound to destroy themselves for their husbands, but this bond is nearer, therefore *Ephes. 5. 31, 32.* this neare conjunction betweene man and wife is made but as a shadow of that betweene Christ and his Church, who is *flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone*, verse 30. And as for this cause they *leave father and mother*, as the *Apostle* says, verse 31. so for this cause must we leave all to cleave to Christ and be subject to him, as, verse 24. that is, our will must be subject to the Lords. As if thou hast such a journey to go, say yea, but what sayes my husband to it? thus Saint James teacheth us to speake, *1am. 4. I will go into such a Citty* (if God will) so in other businesse, say, if the Lord will (to whom I am married) I will doe it, else not: and you have reason for it, because Christ loves us as his Spouse and body: by this union we are one flesh with him, yea one spirit, and *no man hates his owne flesh*, saith the *Apostle* there; though a man hath all the imperfections in his body that may be, soares and biles, &c. yet he hates not his owne flesh, but laboureth partly to cover those wounds and imperfections, and to heale them, if he can, for it is his owne body; So doth the Lord love you, if you have taken him to bee your husband; you have reason therefore never to

for sake him. And if any should object and say, I am a sinfull wretch, an unfit match for him; Consider that yet being his, he will cover your imperfections with his righteousness, as a man covers his sores from the view of others; and he will wash you from your corruptions. As if a man have a fore arme, he doth not only cover it, but also washeth it, and heales it, because it is a member of his. So sayth the Apostle there, *hee hath washed his Church with his owne blood.* And this the *Apostle Saint Paul* calleth a *great mystery*: as if hee had sayd, great things are now revealed therein to you, and worth your considering: why therefore should we not give up our selves to him? a wife may object against her husband and say, another ones husband is more wise, more kind, but thou canst say nothing against him. Consider this, and let it not only be as a notion in your heads, but let it sinke down into your hearts; And let the Name of the Lord not onely be upon you, but also in you. As we have it in *Exod. 23. 21.* spoken of the *Angell* that went with them in the wilderness; *My Name is in him.* My Name is not onely upon him, so that he is not only called my *Angell*, but my Name is also in him, that is, he is so affected as I am, he hates sinne as I doe, and therefore will punish it in you, and loves what is good as I doe. So let the Lords Name be in you, that is, labour to be of the same minde and disposition that God is of, to have a *heart after his hart*, to be affected as he is, *labour to be thus minded*, and you shall be *the Glory of the Lord*, as the wife is the *glory of her husband*, as shee is called, 1 Cor. 11. 7
because

because when shee behaves her selfe wisely and vertuously, those that see her doe commend her husband: Therefore so behave thy selfe in the world, so shew thy selfe like thy husband, that thou bee his *Glory*, *shew forth the vertues of Christ*, as the *Apostle* hath it in *1 Peter 2. 9.* A man must so behave himselfe, as the Image of God may appeare in him; and then he shall be his glory, as a wife when she carries her selfe as the image of her husband, so as his wisdom and vertues appeare in her, then she is his glory. Consider this seriously; you are called by Gods Name; if you make this but an empty title, then you shall have but an empty benefit by it: but if in earnest you cleave to him, and follow him, then he is yours and you his, and all that is his is yours.

If at any time you sinne against God, this should be a great motive to humble your selves the more, that you should sin against him whose Name you beare, to whom thou hast given up thy name, and made a vow and promise to obey him. Thus learne to aggravate your sin, for it doth aggravate it; and this use also I make for the day. There is a double humiliation; one comes from selfe love, and that sometimes makes way for grace, but is not grace: but there is another that comes from a tender affection and love to God and Christ; for when a man loves one, he desires to please him, and therefore when hee displeaseth him, it grieveth him: And this is such a humiliation, as is required of us on these days of Fasting, therefore labour to worke your hearts to this.

Vse 2.

20.2262

Now there is nothing will worke our hearts kindly to be humbled more then love : and neerenesse will surely make us love God : for why doth the wife love the husband, and the husband the wife, but becaule they are neare one to another : Now when the Name of the Lord is called upon us, it is an argument that we are neare unto him ; therefore let that soften thy heart, that thou shouldst carry thy selfe unworthy of this nearenesse. That was that which smote the heart of *David*, when he considered how kind and loving the Lord had beene to him ; the Lord himselfe when he comes to humble his people, hee taketh this course with them, to tell them of the nearenesse that is betweene them and himselfe, as is plaine in *Ier. 2: 2, 3.* Thus saith the Lord, *I remember thee*, that is, put thee in minde of *the kindnesse of thy youth*, that is, which I shewed thee in thy youth, *the love of thy Espousalls, when, &c.* Now when we see the Lord take this course we should take the same ; when he would humble *David*, he sent *Nathan* to humble him, this was one part of his message, to tell him of Gods kindnesse to him, *2 Sam. 12. 7, 8.* thus saith the Lord, *I annointed thee King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul, &c.* And this doubtlesse was the chiefest cause that made him confesse and say, *I have sinned against the Lord*, as it is in *Psal. 51.* he repeates (*against thee*) twice, there lyes the Emphasis, *I have sinned against thee, against thee have I sinned*, that wounded him in a manner alone, that there was so great a neerenesse betwixt the Lord and him. When

a man commits a sinne, there are two things to be considered in it ; first in that he sinnes against the Law of God, and so he sees a great obliquity in sin ; when he lookes on sinne and the streight Law of God, he sees a deformity in it ; but this alone doth not humble us in that kindly manner ; this will make us vile in our owne eyes, this will make us to see a wonderfull deformity in our selves : but now there is another thing to be seene in sinne, and that is the person against whom we commit it, and that is the Lord, and sinne so looked upon comes to have another relation put upon it, not onely as an obliquity and deformity, but as an injury, as a rebellion, an unkindnesse, recompensing evill for good. The first way sin is considered as an obliquity from a straight rule ; but in this latter, as against the Person of God, as against thy husband.

Now therefore to humble thee, doe thus ; Go through all the particular dealings of God with thee, remember all the speciall kindnessees of the Lord, His keeping thee from thy youth, His many deliverances, how many speciall kindnessees He hath done thee, recount His mercies every Fast day ; and when thou hast done this, then goe to thy sinnes and say : These are not only transgressions against Gods streight Law, but also, they are unkindnessees and injuries against His Person ; and adde to all this the consideration of the patience of God : though I have plaid the wretch and harlot as never any have done, yet He hath been patient, and is so kind, as He bids me yet to returne, and this will cause thy heart

to melt towards Him : labour to doe this more and more.

There is an exercise of Humiliation which is done after this manner, spoken of, by seeing the Lords kindnesse to thee, and thy injury against Him, and comparing the one with the other. But thou wilt say, I would faine doe it, but I cannot, my heart is hard, and I cannot get it thus melted. Therefore I say, exercise thy selfe to this. The reason mens hearts are thus hard, &c. is, because men are idle, not willing to recount Gods mercies to them. Say not thy heart is hard, but thou art sluggish, this therefore you ought to doe especially at this time. In *Levit. 23. 29.* there was a time set a part for the Israelites, for the performance of this duty of humiliation, and it was to be their exercise that day, they were then to labour to *afflict their soales*; such as did not, were *to be cut off from among His people.* And this consideration, that wee are called by the name of the Lord, is a meanes to doe it.

Object.

But you will say, I have done this, and yet my heart is hard still.

Ans.

It may be so indeed, and your heart not softened, but yet this I say; First for thy comfort, that if thou continue doing this, the Lord accepteth it; but if thou dost it not, thy blood shall be upon thine own head: we require that thou shouldst onely labour to doe it, and the Lord will accept it, though thou art not able to soften thine heart: And secondly, know for thy comfort also, that God will joyne with thee, if thou labour thus with thy heart, and send the spirit of humiliation on thee; as the Disci-
ples

ples, though they rowed all night, yet CHRIST came at the last, so though thou toilest many daies, and makest no proficiency (as thou thinkest) yet know, that God at length will come and helpe thee, and that because He hath commanded thee to doe this, He will not suffer you to be doing that alwaies in vaine, which He commandeth, and therefore He will come: but that you may have the more ground for this, remember that you have many promises made of Gods helpe; as in *Luke 11. 13.* *If yee then, being evill, know how to give good gifts unto your children, &c.* You shall never alone, of your selves, bee able to soften your hearts without the Holy Ghost, but continue knocking, and the Lord will give you the Holy Ghost, though you bee but strangers. So that every man may come to God and say; Lord, thou hast made such a promise, thou canst not goe from thy word, and therefore deny mee not; and bee earnest with God, and hee cannot deny thee. The woman of *Canaan* was not a *Jew*, yet shee having this ground, that hee was the *Messias*, shee would not bee put off, therefore doe thou so, and thou shalt in the end finde that thy heart is softned: and the longer thou waitest, the greater measure thou shalt have of the spirit; and when thou hast him, hee shall humble thy heart, as in *Zach. 12. 10.* *I will poure upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Ierusalem, the spirit of grace and supplications, and they shall looke upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourne for him as one mourneth for an onely sonne.* The people of *Israel* were heere exhorted to mourne, and to separate

202262

rate themselves, and to doe it every family apart. The businesse was the same that you are to doe every fast-day. Now sayes God, if you seeke mee aright, you must have the spirit; and sayes God, I will doe my part, *I will powre on you the spirit of bowells*, for so the word may bee translated. The meaning of it is this, that when the spirit of God is thus upon you, you will bee tenderly affected to the Lord, even as a mother toward her child: then saith hee, *they shall looke upon him whom they have pierced, and they shall mourne for him, as one mourneth for his onely sonne, and bee in bitternesse for him*, that is, you shall then remember your rebellions, and the remembrance of them shall be bitter to your soules, as bitter things are to your tast: so it was with *Iosiah*: the reason why his heart melted, and he wept when hee heard the booke of the Law read, was because hee had the spirit of bowells, which every one of us should have: so *Iob*, *Now I have seene thee, I abhorre my selfe, Iob 42.* hee was not thus before; hee was a holy man, but this was a new worke: for sayes he *I have heard of thee by the hearing of the eare, but now my eye sees thee.* Hee was enlightned anew, as it were, the spirit shined into his heart with a new light: I have beene in a mist all this while in comparison; but now mine eye hath seene thee, and I have an experimentall feeling of thee, now I abhor my selfe. It is a hard thing to abhor a mans selfe thus, which then a man doth, when Gods spirit with a new light enableth a man to see Gods love and kindnesse, and his owne unkindnesse in their colours.

If the *Lords Name* be called upon us, we should
learne hence to keepe his *Name* faire, to keepe it
pure and unspotted ; As it was said of Saint *Paul*,
he was a *chosen vessell to carry Gods Name* ; and there-
fore it behooves them to take heede how it be pol-
luted by them, or they give occasion that it be blas-
phemed ; for the evill committed by you reflects
upon the Name of the Lord. A small thing is a
great matter in you: one fly corrupts a box of oyt-
ment, but many flies in a barrell of Pitch or Tarre,
are counted nothing ; so many finnes in a wicked
man, redound not so much to the dishonour of
Gods Name, as one in the Saints. When a Saint
doth a thing that is uncomely, he polluteth the
Name of the Lord, not that it can be polluted in it-
selfe, but it seemes so to other men. Before men are
regenerate, their finnes are as blots upon a table,
before a Picture be drawne upon it, which are not
regarded of any ; but after it is drawne, the least
blot is seene of every one : So it is when men are
but strangers to God ; the finnes which they com-
mit, reflect not to the disgrace of God : but when
Gods Image is renewed in a man, then these finnes
are more taken notice of, and cause the *Name of God*
to be blasphemed of his enemies.

This should teach us, not to be ashamed of God
and the profession of his Name : for shall the Lord
not be ashamed of us, as he shewes he is not, when
he is willing to put his Name upon us ; and shall we
be ashamed of him ? it is an unreasonable and an un-
equall thing for a child to be ashamed of his father,
for a wife to be ashamed of her husband, and so
for

Vse 3.

Vse 4

202262

for us to be ashamed of the Lord, whose Name we beare.

This is the rather to bee spoken of, because it is a fault very common amongst us, that wee doe not take notice of.

Object.

But the most will say, we are not ashamed of religion, but wee account it rather a glory to be accounted Christians.

Answ.

Give mee leave to examine you by these two Questions, First, are you not ashamed of the strictest waies of Religion? There is a common course of Religion, that you need not be ashamed of, because all are for it, and commend it; but yet these are some speciall acts of Religion that men cast shame upon, such was that act of *David*, when he daunced before the Arke, which seemed absurd in *Michals* eyes for a King to doe; yet he sayd, *I will be yet more vile*: some of the wayes of God give a more peculiar distaste to wicked men, and there is a shame cast upon the power of Religion, by reason that the multitude goeth another way. Now what is singular, that shame is cast upon: as in any thing, let the multitude have never so ill favoured a fashion, it is no shame, whereas if a few others weare a garment farre more comely, but different from the fashion, yet it would be a shame to them; so it is here, there is shame cast upon holinesse and sincerity, because the multitude is not holy, for holy men are like *the gleanings after the harvest, or like the grapes after the vintage, exceeding fewe*, and not enough to bring Godlinesse into fashion: Therefore if thou wouldst know whether thou art ashamed of God

God or no, try whether you be ashamed of any the peculiar acts of Religion, upon which shame is usually cast among men.

The second question I would aske is this : are you ashamed of God, or any taske or duty, or his people among those where the shame will doe you some hurt ? consider whether you are not ashamed of Religion among sinners ; it is an expression put in for some cause in *Marke 8. 38. Whosoever shall be ashamed of mee and my words in this adulterous generation, &c.* As if he should have sayd, it may be you would not be ashamed of me among Saints ; but he that is ashamed of me amongst the worst of men, and in a dangerous time, in such a time as when it is ignominious to be a Christian (as it was then) of that man will I be ashamed in the day of the Resurrection. You must therefore try your selves, what you do before wicked men, and what you do before great men, when it is some losse to you to professe **C H R I S T**, or any truth of His ; and know that this is not a small matter : We must professe **C H R I S T** in our times, wee must make the word of God the rule of our lives. Perhaps wee thinke that so long as our hearts are right, and so, that we runne not out into evill wayes with others, the matter of profession is but a small change, that that is but as the leaves of godlinesse ; if God have the fruit, what need we care for the leaves ? But remember that in *Rom. 10. 10. With the heart man beleeueth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation :* This will damne many of us, the want of profession, as well as the greatest finnes.

sinnes. The Scrip^ure is peremptory ; we must professe Gods Name at all times, even then when we shall doe it with the danger of our lives. You know that *Daniel* did so, in danger of his life, and it was not a needlesse matter, but it was in a matter that concerned his life. But that you may do this the more willingly, consider why men are ashamed of this profession, why ? because men doe speake evill of you, but is this a good reason ? No, for they doe so out of their ignorance, as it is in *1 Pet. 4. 4.* *wherein they thinke it strange, that you run not with them into the same excesse of riot, speaking evill of you.* But if they knew the ground of your actions, they would not speake evill of you. They see your actions, but your rules and principles that you goe by in these actions, they know not : and therefore they speake evill of you. And shall we be discouraged for this ? What if a *Geometrician* should be drawing of lines and figures, and there should come in a Country man and seeing him should laugh at him, would the *Geometrician* leave off his art for his rision ? surely no, for hee knowes hee laughs at him out of his ignorance, because he knowes not the art and the grounds thereof : and is it not as great a folly for us to be ashamed of godlinesse, because men that understand it not, speake evill of it ! surely it is. And therefore remember *Dauids* two reasons, when he did that act for which he was reviled by his wife. *I did it for the Lord, that chose me :* as if he should have said, the Lord deserved it, he loved and chose me, therefore I did it. So this is thy case : The Lord hath chosen thee, when hee
hath

hath passed by many thousands of others, therefore doe it for the Lord. And another reason of *Dauids* was, it makes for my honour in the eyes of those that are good, *2 Sam. 6. 24.* Men thinke it brings no honour, because they shall get not any credit by it amongst men: but know thus much, when men shrink from God, then God makes true that rule, *them that dishonour me, I will dishonour*: he that hath made a profession of godlinesse, and afterward falls away, God never suffers such an one to escape, but he punisheth him one way or other. Therefore *Moses* exhorteth the people in *Deut. 4. 6.* to keepe Gods Statutes and to doe them: for *this is your wisdom, and your understanding in the sight of the Nations, &c.* Now why should you bee backward to beare the shame that the world casteth upon you? doth not God observe all, looke on, and with approbation? doth not God tell the Church of *Ephesus*, in *Revel. 2. 2.* *I know thy workes, and thy labour, and thy patience, &c.* When any man at any time casteth shame upon you for religion, it is a persecution which you will record, as *Luther* said, when any spake evill against him; this will be accounted on my reckoning at the last day, that speech is to be considered and weighed of us all. *I know thy patience*; therefore be not ashamed, but be bold in the profession and feare of God, doing those things that are glorious in the eyes of God and men that judge of things aright.

If the Name of the Lord be called upon us, this should comfort us concerning our selves, and concerning the Church of God; for where Gods

Name

vse 5.

202762

Name is called upon any Church, any Nation, any man, you may be sure he will defend them, for he is engaged so to doe, that his Name may not be polluted; for the Lord is the worse spoken of, when his people suffer. Therefore thou whosoever thou art, rich or poore, be confident, God will defend thee in all thy sufferings. A man will not suffer his wife to be wronged; for saith he, she is my wife, he accounts himselfe wronged, when any injury is done to her: so God accounteth himselfe injured, when any wrong is done to thee on whom his Name is called, *Esay 4.5,6.* Although (saith the Lord) they may seeme to be helpelesse, notwithstanding this (saith the Lord) *fear not, I will create a cloud by day, and a flaming fire by night*: that is, though there be no meanes, yet I will worke without meanes. *I will create them*, make them of nothing: I will be both their direction and protection; for the cloud by day and the fire by night, hath reference to that cloud that went before the Children of *Israel* in the wilderness, which led them in the way, and kept them from the heate of the Sunne. *For upon all the glory shall be a defence*; that is, the Churches though they seeme never so base, yet they are glorious; for therefore they are called glorious; and not only upon one man or two, but upon *all the glory*, that is, every man in the Church: upon *all the glory* shall be a defence.

Object.

But then if this objection come, why? doe we not see them afflicted? doe they not often suffer a storme; are they not often scorched with the heate of reproach?

Ther-

unlesse men doe humble themselves, they can have no interest in these promises.

2

Secondly, Affirmatively; That if they do humble themselves, then God will be merciful to them, and forgive their finnes.

Doct. 4.

For the handling of the first, I raise this Doctrine out of the words: *That without Humiliation no man shall obtaine mercie*: Wee see that God suspendeth Mercy upon it here, as without which no Mercie can bee expected; which therefore must needs bee thought a matter of great consequence, and the more largely to be insisted upon.

I expresse the doctrine in a more large and generall word *Humiliation*, which contains in it, as well *humiliation passive*, or being humbled, as *humiliation active* (as for more cleere distinction sake I call them) whereby we *humble our selves*: which is the maine thing intended in the Text, explicitly and directly, which also in the prosecution of this point I mainly intend; yet I shut up both together, in this negative part of this discourse: because they are, though in themselves distinct, yet alwaies conjoined in their working, and the latter doth alwaies presuppose the former, and doth necessarily imply it here: for no man did ever come to humble himselfe, that was not first humbled. This negative part of excluding men from mercy without both these, being also alike common to both, it being a like true, that no man ever did attaine mercy, that was not first humbled, and that did not humble himselfe: So as in this negative part they agree and concur.

Againe,

Againe, though that affirmative part mentioned is proper to that humiliation active, the promises of Interest in Mercy being made to them that humble themselves, and not to all that are humbled: there being many that are much humbled, who yet obtaine not Mercy; yet I joine both together in this first part chiefly; because as they are conjoined in their working, so they must necessarily be in the explication of them; for we cannot come distinctly to know and finde out what it is *To humble our selves* (which is the thing I principally ayme at) without knowing what it is to *be humbled*, the one beginning where the other ends: the one being a preparative to the other. That therefore wee may see how farre the one and the other goes, and how they are distinguished, we will shut both up in this first doctrine.

Now in handling this Doctrine we will doe two things.

First, shew that men must be humbled and humble themselves, ere they can come to have interest in these promises.

We will shew what it is to humble a mans selfe and to be humbled.

For the first, this place alone is sufficient ground. **G O D** would not have put in such a condition in vaine, if it might have beene spared in any, but besides this ground wee have the practise of all the master builders, who made it their first worke (as here it is the first condition) to humble men, that they might bee brought to humble themselves: And to omit all other instances, wee

have all the three Persons seales to this method.

1

This was **G O D** the Fathers method in the first Sermon that ever was preached (which himselfe also preached) as a patterne for all Ministers to follow. And when hee would draw *Adam* and *Eve* in to seeke the promise of mercy, he first expostulates the matter with them, to humble them for their sin: and then lets fall the promise of the *Messias*.

2

And secondly, **I E S U S C H R I S T** the second Person in his first Sermons in Preaching the Gospel, as in *Luke 4. 7.* shewes his approbation of this method in that he makes this his first subject of his first Sermon, as appears by the text hee takes to preach the Gospel, but to whom? to those that are first humble and humbled. *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to such as are poore and broken in heart.*

3

And the same order, the Holy Ghost the third Person was foretold by Christ, that when he was come, hee would observe in working upon mens hearts by the ministry of the Apostles, &c. *Iohn 16. 8. He shall convince the world of sin: for humiliation, that is his first worke; then of righteousness, for justification: lastly of Iudgement; that is, that sanctification which persons justified are to have wrought in them; We come now to the explication and reasons of this point which shall be.*

1

To shew the necessity of this humiliation to the other that follow.

Of the order of it, as it is here placed the first of all the rest.

2

For the first, it is true indeed, that the Lord might bring men home to him without this humiliation. He could doe as he did at the first creation, say no more but *let there be light*, and there would be light, and that without any of this thunder: he might say, let there be grace, and there would be grace; he could come in the still voyce without renting the rockes, and say no more but, *open yee everlasting doores, lift up your heads yee gates*, and they would be open; but as though he might have brought the Children of *Israel* out of *Ægypt* into the Land of *Canaan*, without leading them through the wilderness, yet his good pleasure was thereby rather to *humble them and prove them*; so it is here.

And the reasons of this necessity may bee drawne from the relation, and respect which this humiliation hath both to the other conditions that follow, and all that is promised here in the text: unto which wee will fit the reasons that follow.

I.

As first, without this men will not seeke out for and come unto **C H R I S T**: *they will not seeke his face*, that is, his Person: the Law is our Schoole-Master to bring us to **C H R I S T**, by humbling us: men would not come in to him unlesse they were driven; men would not seeke him unlesse they themselves were first lost; men would not receive him unlesse they were first humbled; *the poore receive the Gospell*; the poore in spirit.

202262

It is necessary in respect of receiving and seeking for mercy and pardon, and forgiveness, which is the maine thing here promised, *I will bee mercifull to their sinnes*, for untill then our propounding pardon and the promises of it, and inviting men to come in would bee all but lost labour: for untill then, men will give us that answer, and the promises the same entertainment, which they did that were invited to the Marriage Feast, *Matth. 22. 5, 6.* The text says they made light of it, and so we finde by experience, that when wee preach the great things of the Gospel; as Iustification, and remission of sinnes, men account them as a small thing, and set light by them: and the reason is, because they are not humbled; men otherwise would not prize Christ nor the promise of the pardon by him (as *Manna* was not prized by the *Israelites*) nor his righteousness, by which they are to be forgiven: a man happily would be content to have Christs righteousness, as a bridge to go upon to heaven, but he will not prize it as *Paul* did, who was ambitious of nothing so much as to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that w^{ch} is by faith, accounting all things in himselfe and out of himselfe drosse and dung in comparison of it; but a man unhumbled will not set this high prize upon it, and God will not have his Jewels, much lesse Christ and pardon of sinne cast away at randome to those who shall not value them; but when a man shall see the badnesse of his nature, the multitudes of his particular sinnes, and see that in his heart he never thought had beene there, and stand amazed at them, then to have

have such a righteousness as shall perfectly cover all these sinnes, this he will thinke a great matter. So it was to Saint *Paul*, when he saw himselfe the greatest of sinners. And when a man thus sees his particular sores and diseases, and something in *Christs* righteousness to answer them all; as *Christs* patience to answer his impatience, *Christs* love to stand for his hatred, *Christs* holiness of nature to cover his uncleanness, he will then begin to esteeme every Jewell in that Cabinet, for he knowes he could not spare one part of that righteousness, he sees a glorious righteousness to cloath and cover his nakedness from top to toe, and this makes him prize it and every part of it, which a man unhumbled will not doe; and as he would not esteeme the imputed righteousness of Christ, so nor inherent righteousness from him, whereby he should be enabled to turne from his evill waies; but when a man sees and knowes what a heart he hath, how false, how full of sinnes, and empty of grace, and what strong lusts are there, then when he shall finde the contrary graces wrought in him, he prizeth them highly, and Christ for them, because they are the pretious gifts of Christ, for he knowes and acknowledgeth they are the sole worke of Christ, because in his nature dwelleth no good thing. And why else doth God after conversion suffer his people to fall into sinne, and into variety of temptations, but that they might be more humbled still, and so know the worth of Christ herein?

It is required men should be humbled, because else they will not actually *turne from their evill*

Reas. 3.

202262

ways, nor be obedient to Christ in all things in their lives. An unbroken heart is like an untamed horse, that will not endure the bridle, and be guided by it, like an untamed heifer that will not goe with the yoke ; such a man that God may command him what he will, but he will doe what he list : but when the heart is broken and humbled once, then as Saint *Paul* trembling said, *Acts 9.* he will say also, *Lord what wilt thou have me doe ?* I will doe what thou wilt, yea, and suffer what thou wilt ; call me to suffer, for thee. If this question had beene asked Saint *Paul* before he was thus humbled, he would have given another answer : before God may bid us doe what he will, but we as stubborn servants will doe what wee thinke good : we are proud and unbroken, and pride is the cause of all disobedience, and therefore it is said, *high thoughts must be cast downe, that exalt themselves against the knowledge of God ; ere every thought can be brought into the obedience of Christ. 2 Cor. 10. 5.* They exalt themselves against the knowledge of God and his will ; for when his will is knowne, the heart yields not still : when the *L O R D* commands any thing, as to take heede of evill company, to have a care of their speeches, whilst men are unhumbed, they are ready to expostulate the matter, and in the end will doe nothing at all : but when a man is humbled, and the high thoughts cast downe, then he brings every thought and affection (that exalted it selfe before) into the obedience of Christ. And as all disobedience is from pride and stubbornesse of the will, so all obedience is from humility ;

mility ; when the heart is humbled, it is made pliable to God, *Esay 66. 2. I will looke to him that is contrite, and trembleth at my words* ; they are both there joyned : that is, when he heareth any command from me, he is afraid to breake it, afraid of admitting the very occasions of sinning : A man that hath beene scorched with the fire dares not easily meddle with it againe, and the reason is, it makes a man choose the Lord freely for his husband and Lord, and from thence followes kinde obedience to him.

He that hath made the choyce himselfe will serve, else not ; but he will condemne himselfe, that he should make a choyce so unsuitable to him ; and it also teacheth a man to set an high price upon Christ, and forgivenesse of sinnes, as you heare ; and that will set all thy desires aworke, and cause thee to refuse no obedience whether active or passive : for what is the reason men obey their lusts, but because they prize pleasures, have an high esteeme of honours, &c. and the same effect will the prizing of CHRIST have in thee, to doe any thing for him, so as thou shalt not count thy life deare for him.

They would not doe all this constantly and for ever, if they should come to Christ and bee obedient for a while (as *Iohns* hearers and *Herod* was) yet they would returne unto their vomit againe : and not stay with him if they were not humbled, they might come in, as those hearers signified by the second and third ground did, who received the seede with joy, and as those of whom it is said Christ would

Reas. 4.

20226.2

would not commit himselfe to them, but stay with him, men will not unlesse they bee humbled : For unlesse a man be brought to part with all for Christ, and to sell all, hee will in the end repent of his bargain ; if there bee a reservation of any thing, the time will come hee will goe backe, and start aside like a broken Bowe ; and untill a man bee thoroughly humbled, hee will not bee brought to part with all for CHRIST ; hee that is humbled, hee onely is the Merchant-like minded man, who sells all hee hath and goes away rejoycing, is glad at the heart that hee hath Christ though with the losse of the whole world ; he is willing to take Christ upon all conditions, with losses and crosses, and to deny himselfe in every thing ; for hee knowes the bitterneesse of sinne, and so sets such a price upon Christ as if the bargain were to make againe, hee would doe as hee had done, but the other what hee hath done in a fit, he repents him of afterwards, and therefore true repentance (which godly sorrow and true humiliation worketh) is called *repentance never to bee repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 10. Other sorrow than Godly may worke a repentance, but it is such as men afterwards repent of. Men are soone weary of the yoke of Christ, because they have not felt how grievous the yoke of sinne and Sathan is, but to one who hath felt the burthen of sinne, the yoke of Christ is easie and sweete.

Reas

The last Reason hath relation to the last thing here promised, of taking away the Iudgements and *healing the Land*. God should not have the praise of his Iudgements and of his Mercy in taking them away

away, unlesse men were humbled; for if when God did afflict men, he should restore them againe without this humiliation, men would thinke that God wronged them before, and now did but right them, but when God hath humbled them so farre, that they acknowledge his Iustice, in afflicting them, and their owne desert to bee utterly destroyed, and confesse that it is his mere Mercy they were not consumed, and humble themselves under his mighty hand, and now if the Iudgement bee taken off, and his wrath blowne over, then they give him the praise of his Mercy and Iudgements.

Thus you see why of necessity it is required: Now let us see the reason of the order of it, why it is required thus in the first place: It is the first condition here: there is something in the order, and to bee said by way of reason for it, and the reason in generall is, because nothing is acceptable to God, till the heart bee humbled: You may pray, which is another condition, and you may heare, &c. but all you doe is but lost labour, unlesse it come from a broken heart.

For first that is alone a fit sacrifice for God, without which yet no sacrifice is accepted: This you may see *Psalm. 51. 16, 17. Thou desirest not sacrifice, else I would give it thee; thou delightest not in burnt offerings. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, and a contrite heart, oh God, thou wilt not despise.* David knew that till his heart was broken, all his good deeds and all holy duties would have beene in vaine, and it is as if David should have said, *Lord, before I was thus humbled and my heart thus broken (as in the beginning*

Reas. I.

202262

ning of the Psalme hee had expressed that it was)
thou didst desire no sacrifice of mee, nor wouldst have de-
lighted in no burnt offering from mee, but the sacrifices of
God are a broken spirit, and other duties but as they
 come from it. This is the maine sacrifice, and with-
 out it, nothing acceptable, unlesse it bee laid upon
 this low Altar which sanctifies the sacrifice.

Reas. 2.

As it is onely a fit Sacrifice for God, so this only
 makes us fit Priests to God; and before wee are fit
 to offer a sacrifice acceptable, wee must bee Priests;
 and, we become not Priests to God till wee have of-
 fered our selves first to God as a sacrifice, *2 Cor. 8. 5*
 and that wee are not, till wee our selves bee slaine,
 and broken, and so made a sacrifice.

Reas. 3.

Nothing is accepted, till the Holy Ghost dwell
 in the heart; and untill a man bee Humbled, the
 Spirit of God dwells not in his heart: And there-
 fore what hee doth till then favours not of the Spi-
 rit, but a carnall heart, and so is not acceptable: Till
 a man is Humbled, hee keepes the doore shut upon
 the Lord and his Spirit. There is one within his
 heart is full already; he dwells in his owne heart him-
 selfe; therefore it is said *Esay 57. 15*. That *he dwells*
in a contrite heart, that is, in it alone, for there is onely
 roome for him to doe what he will in all the cham-
 bers of it.

Reas. 4.

Vntill a man will bee obedient in all things, no-
 thing he doth is acceptable: He that turnes his care
 from the Law, his prayer shall bee abominable.
 Now one that is not humbled throughly, hee may
 bee obedient in many things, he may pray &c. but
 yet hee will have by-ways of his owne, he hath not
 fully

fully renounced himselfe, that is, not Humbled: Now unlesse a mans obedience be generall, nothing is acceptable.

And so wee come to the second thing propounded, *what this Humiliation is*, and herein our maine enquiry is after that which is mainly intended in the text. *What it is to Humble a mans selfe.* But because the finding of it out depends upon the other also, wee will with it shew also *what it is to bee Humbled*, that so wee may the better know the true Humiliation required of us; and for the finding out of this wee will first set before you the examples of them who have Humbled themselves, and have beene Humbled in Scripture, and from thence gather what it is.

For this you shall finde *Manasses* in the 2 *Chron.* 33. in his affliction Humbling himselfe greatly, and the Lord was intreated of him. verse 12. Likewise wee have that of *S. Paul* Humbled. *Acts* 9. 6. where wee finde him *trembling* and astonished, and saying, *Lord what wilt thou have mee doe?* See another example in *Acts* 2. 37. of those who were *prickt in their hearts*, crying out, *what shall wee doe to bee saved?* And so of the *Goaler*: *Acts*. 16. who *came trembling and astonied*, and would have killed himselfe: and likewise of the *Prodigall*, *Luke* 15. (which though a parable, yet sets forth this condition of a soule Humbled to us,) of whom it is said, that *none gave unto him*, and that *hee came unto himselfe*, &c.

Out of all these we gather those two maine parts of Humiliation mentioned: Humiliation passive, and active. The first whereof makes way for the second

202262

second, unto which no promise is made, and which may bee found in an unregenerate man; the second, which is a fruit of Sanctification, which is meant here, and unto which the promise is made: These goe both together in the Godly; and hee that hath the second never wants the first in some measure more or lesse, though many have the first that have not the second.

Now the first is nothing else but a sence of sinne, and Gods wrath for it; expressed to us in those former examples, by being *prickt in the heart*, it being a wandring of the heart and spirit.

Vnto which is joyned trembling feare, with considering and comming to a mans selfe, as wee have it in the parable.

And this passive *Legal Humiliation* stands in these particulars.

1. A sensiblenesse of sinne: before a man is as one that is in a dead sleep; what is done to him he fees not, nor what is said he heares not, is sensible of nothing: But this is the awaking of a man to be sensible of sinne; so as now hee is wounded, now hee is smitten with it, now hee fees it. So the *Goaler* as the foundation of the prison was shaken, so was his heart also, and had an earth-quake within, as well as one without; and his awaking out of sleepe was a resemblance of his awakened heart.

2. This Humiliation makes a man fearefull of his estate; whereas before he was bold: and others that are not humbled goe on *boldly and are punished*, as it is sayd of the foole in the Proverbs.

It makes a man consider his estate, which he never did

did before; as the Prodigall *came to himselfe*, that is, entered into a serious consideration of his estate; before a man thought himselfe in a good estate; little imagined hee was *in the gall of bitternesse*; but this worke shewes him his poverty, and that hee is altogether *naked*, and that hee hath nothing to sustaine him, as the Prodigall saw hee had not, no worth at all in him.

And this first worke of Humiliation is wrought by the Law and the curse thereof; which sayes in his hearing, *Cursed bee he that abides not in all things to doe them.*

By the Law I say, which is *the rule of righteousness*, whereof all particular rules are branches; and by the threatnings thereof, which are all branches of that great curse. The one being as the *lightning* to discover *sinne*, the other like the *thunder-bolt* that strikes the heart with *fear of Gods Judgements*: the one is like *the Inditement*, the other as the *Sentence of the Iudge*. I put both these together, because both goe to humble a man. The Law is like the Task-masters of Egypt, that commanded the Israelites to doe the worke, but gave them no straw; so the Law tells us, this and this is to bee done, and binds us to doe it, but gives us no strength, and so thereby discovers our sinfulness and inability to any good: and then as the task-masters did beate them that failed of their tale, so comes the curse and strikes them dead, that *continue not in all things to doe the Law*; and these two put together worke this Legall *humiliation*: neither by the Law is meant only those *ten words* spoken in *Horeb*, but together with the explanation of

202262

of them, as wee finde them expounded in the Prophets and the whole Scriptures : so that by the Law is meant that rectitude which the whole Scripture doth require. Now therefore when the Scriptures are laid to our hearts, the rectitude of the Scriptures is compared with the crookednes of our hearts and lives, and thereby we come to see how that the least sinne is forbidden, and that the least dutie must not be omitted, and that *we must give an account for every idle word*, and every lustfull thought and motion in the heart; as Saint *Paul* when humbled, saw lust to be sinne; and then we come to see withall the curse due to the least : This humbleth a man.

And unto this is further required the helpe of the Spirit joyning therewith, without which the Law doth not humble a man: who is therefore called *The spirit of bondage*, because he enlightneth a man to see his bondage and slavery to sinne and Sathan, and his subjection to Gods wrath; not that hee makes him such, or brings bondage with it, but discovers it; and this not onely by shewing a man his bondage, but hee makes him believe it : For there must be a faith to humble as well as to comfort, whereas wee set light by the threatnings, and believe them not; for would the swearer sweare if hee believed that threatening, the *Lord will not hold him guiltlesse that taketh his name in vaine*? When therefore the Spirit enlighteneth a man to see his sinnes, and makes him believe the threatnings denounced against them, then a man is humbled and not before.

And yet though these threatnings are propounded by the Word, and made effectuell by the Spirit,

Spirit, yet usually some *affliction* puts life into them ; as we see in *Manasses*, and also in *S. Paul*, who was first stricke off his horse to the ground, and in the *Taylor* who thought verily all his prisoners gone, for whom his owne life must have beene answerable ; so as he would have killed himselfe : sometimes a reall affliction, sometimes an imaginary one, an apprehension of Iudgement, shame, poverty, misery doth God use to put life into the threatnings, and they put life into the law ; and then the law is brought home to the conscience ; and so sinne is brought to light ; for when men are sensible of miseries, then they are often brought to enquiry into the Law of God to finde what should bee the cause of it : and when the Law is brought home to the conscience, then sinne is made alive. Saint *Paul* sayes, *Romans 7. Sinne appeares to bee sinne*, which before was as colours in the darke ; and sinne being made alive, then *I dyed*, says *Paul* there, that is, he apprehended himselfe a dead man, in which is a discovery of *sin* and our *subjection to death* for it ; wherein do consist those two parts of this former humiliation, which makes way for the second humiliation.

Thus you see, what to *bee humbled* is. Now we come to the second, what it is to *humble a mans selfe* : which begins, when the other ends : for then a man lookes out for the remedy, as those who cryed out *what shall we doe to be saved ?* which is the second thing to be observed in those examples ; after the wounding of their hearts, they made an enquiry *what to doe to be saved*. For those that belong

to Gods Election goe yet further : there is another kinde of *Evangelicall humiliation* wrought in them, which is a fruit of *sanctification*; for in one whom G O D meanes to save, when hee is come to this, the L O R D sends the *spirit of adoption* into his heart, the *spirit of grace*, as *Zachary* calls him, which gives him some secret hope, hee shall bee received to mercy, if he will come in; which is a worke of faith in some degree begun : and then says the soule with it selfe, I will goe and humble my selfe, I will goe home to G O D, and chinge my course, and give up my selfe to him and serve him : and this we shall find in these examples mentioned before, especially of the *Prodigall*, *Lu. 15.* he came to this conclusion, *If I stay here, I dye for hunger; but in my fathers house there is bread enough*: here was hope which bred this resolution. *I will go home, and say to my father, I have sinned against heaven and thee, &c.* here was that true humiliation we speake of. So *Manasses*, he humbled himselfe greatly, out of an hope of mercy; for a man comes not to this active humiliation wherein he kindly humbleth himselfe, unlesse he hath hope of mercy; and the beginning of faith is with a hope of mercy, which sets a man a worke to goe to God, and say; Lord, I have committed such and such sins, but I will returne to them no more; I am worthy of nothing.

Now there are foure severall compositions of foure payres of ingredients that have influence into this second kind of humiliation, to cause us to *humble our selves*.

I Payre, an hope of mercy, as well as a sense of misery; that

that whereas before we did looke upon God as a severe Iudge ; we looke now on him as one willing to receive us both are requisite. *Sence of misery* onely, brings a man but to himselfe, as the *Prodigall* first is said to come to himselfe ; but *hope of mercy* joyned with it, drives a man home to God, as it did also him ; without which sence of misery drives us from the LORD ; but hope of mercy being added to it, causeth this active *humiliation*, wee speake of, whereby wee say, *I will goe and humble my selfe.*

2 Payre of ingredients are *the sence of our owne emptinesse*, together with an apprehension of that *Al sufficiency* that is in God ; which we also may see in the *Prodigall*, when he said, *I shall starve and dye, if I stay here ; but in my fathers house is bread enough*: he lookt to that all sufficient fulnesse that was in God to supply his wants. The creature whilst it findeth any thing in it selfe, it will stand upon its owne bottome, and not bee humbled, but when it finds nothing in its selfe but emptinesse, then it beginneth to seeke out for a bottome ; which it seeing to be in God alone, it goes out to him ; for men will not be drawne off from their owne bottome, till they see another bottome to stand upon.

3 There must be a sence of a mans owne *sinfulness*, and the LORD IESUS *his righteousness*, and so a light comes in that discovereth both: thus when *S. Paul* was humbled, there was a light shone about him, which was an outward symbole of that new light which shone within him, of Christ and his own sinfulness.

4

A sence of the love of God and Christ, joyned with a sence of mans owne unkindnesse unto God, whereby wee looke upon sins as injuries done to God, and an unkindnesse shewne therein.

And now let us see the difference betwixt these two works or parts of humiliation, that we may further understand what it is to *humble our selves*.

I

And first, they differ in the matter they are conversant about; in that first, a man is humbled properly, but for the punishment, a man indeed is humbled for sinne, yet principally as it hath relation to punishment; it is guilt works on him; he is not humbled for sin, as it is contrary to God, and his holines, but as contrary to himselfe and his own good: and thus we are not humbled, till we come to love God, and to have a light discovering the holinesse and purity of his nature, which one that is savingly humbled hath wrought in him.

2

They differ in their grounds and principles whence they arise.

The first ariseth but from selfe-love, and is but a worke of nature; though thus farre a worke of God to stirre up selfe-love, by the sence of misery and to awaken it; but so as any unreasonable creature if in danger, useth to bee sensible of it: and what wonder then is it for a man, when hee begins to have some sence of hell and death, let into his conscience, to be wounded and apprehensive of it! but the other ariseth from the love of God kindled in the heart by hope of grace and mercy.

3

They differ in the instrumentall causes that work them; the one is wrought by the spirit of bondage, by

by an enlightning meerly to see his bondage, and the Soule is as one that is in bondage fearing God as a master ; and he hath no further light then thus to see God as a Iudge : but this other is wrought by the spirit of adoption making the Gospell also effectual, discovering God as a father.

They differ in their effects ; as,

The one driveth a man from G O D, but this latter causeth a man to goe to G O D and to seeke Christ : it workes that affection to Christ that the Church in the Canticles had to him, *who would not give over seeking him, till shee had found him whom her soule did love.* Though there be twenty obstacles in the way, yet the soule hath no rest ; as a stone hath no rest, till it be in its owne center, so nor this soule thus humbled but in God ; and therefore gives not over seeking him, though it hath never so many denyalls.

The first breeds death, an *acedia*, a deadnesse and listlesnesse, it makes a man as a log, that moves not to God in prayer. So it wrought in *Nabal*, and *Achitophell*, it breeds such discouragement as often ends in death. Of *worldly sorrow* : (and such is all sorrow whereof God is not the end) *commeth death* : but when it is right and true and kindly sorrow for sinne, it doth that which an affection should doe, it quickneth him to do that which he ought to do : so feare when it is right worketh, and so all other affections, which were put into the soule for that end that it might bee stirred up by them to that which it should doe, for G O D and its owne good ; and therefore this affection of sorrow for

sinne quickens a man to seeke out to God when it is right.

3

The first breeds a fiercenesse and turbulency in a mans spirit; as we see often in men whose consciences are awakened to see their sins, they are fiercer then they were before; for guilt of sin vexeth their spirits; and where there is no sence of mercy from God, there is none to men: but he that is broken for sinne spends his anger upon himselfe, frets chiefly for his owne vilenesse and unworthinesse; and the Peace of God which his heart hath a sence of makes his spirit *gentle, and peaceable and easie to be entreated and perswaded*: bring him Scripture, and *a child may lead him* and perswade him. The *rough wayes are made smooth*, the rough and froward dispositions of the heart, and every *Mountain-like affection* cast downe, as it is said they were by Saint Iohns ministry, who came to humble men and prepare men for Christ.

4

They differ in their continuance; the former alone proves but a passion, and it comes but from *flesh*, so as all the fruits of *flesh* are, it is but *as the flower of the grasse*: of the same fading nature the roote is from whence it comes: though it comes like a violent torrent into the heart, and swells above the bankes, yet it is but as a land-flood; but this latter is as a constant river that hath a spring, which though it keepes within the bankes, and doth not overflow so much as the other, yet it runnes constantly, and the further it runnes, the greater it growes.

5

I will give you also some properties of that humiliation

humiliation to which the promise is made here, by which it may be yet further knowne and differenced.

We will take those fruits of it we finde in the text. 1. It will make a man pray, and 2. *Seeke Gods face, and turne from his evill wayes*: it hath alwayes these as the consequences of it:

To pray. *Indas* was humbled, but hee had no minde to pray, nor an ability to pray; the spirit of prayer went not with it; but hee that hath that true humiliation, is able to poure forth his soule to God: and indeed prayer is not the worke of the memory and wit, but the proper worke of a broken heart.

Againe, secondly, *to seeke Gods face*, this true humiliation cuts a man off from his owne roote and bottome, and causeth him to seeke the Lord alone: which seeking useth to be expressed in prayer: that other will cause a man to seeke mercy, but this *to seeke Gods face*; that is, if they have his favour, it is enough: they seeke God as sequestred from all things else; though such a soule had assurance of being freed from hell, it would not content him, unlesse he saw Gods face.

That which *Absalom* counterfeited (as knowing it to be a true straine of a loving and humbled child to a Father) when he had his life given him, though banished from the Court, *Let mee see my fathers face, though hee kill mee*, is in an humbled soule in truth towards G O D: others as G O D sayes in *Hosea*, *Seeke mercy, but they turned not to me*: they sought not me.

202262

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True humiliation causeth a man to turne from his *evill wayes* : the other makes a man but give them over for a time, whilst he is sicke of them ; and then *retournes againe, as a Dog to his vomit, 2 Chron. 33. 23.* It is said *Amon humbled not himselfe as Manasses his father had humbled himselfe, but transgressed more and more* : which implies, that when a man is humbled as he should, he transgresseth no more as hee had done ; and so *Manasses*, did so humble himselfe, as he transgressed no more. It will make him become stronger against that sin he hath transgressed in: as a bone that hath been broken is stronger when it is right set againe ; he especially humbleth himselfe for and turnes from his beloved sin, and with that from all the rest.

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Property is, it makes a man to cleave fast to Christ, and so draw nigh to him in all the duties of obedience, to obey him constantly, generally and throughly. Men may have light wounds made in their hearts which doe not drive them to the Physician, which awakeneth men a little, but they fall asleepe againe : but when God humbleth so as to save, he so fastens the apprehension of his misery upon him, as to bring him home to Christ : he sets on the avenger of blood to pursue him to the utmost, and not for a mile or two, but to follow him till he be driven into the City of refuge : There is an humiliation, which hath not this effect and consequent of it (and therefore I mention it as a property of the true) and this because of a defect that is in it, in which respect though it come neare the true, yet differs from it : which is in the event seene
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in this, that the true causeth to come to Christ, and to cleave to him without separation.

That you may therefore see the difference betweene this and the other, and wherein that other is defective ; marke how that which is true workes this in one, who yet is not quite cut off, but hangs by a thred as it were, there being some secret *Fibra*, some veines and strings that are not cut in peeces, which keepe life in the old man, and a man remaineth still upon his old stocke, and so long Christ comes not into the heart ; not untill a man be unbottomed of himselfe, and sees he can no way be happy in himselfe, or within his owne compasse, but sees all is to bee had in and from the **L O R D I E S U S** ; untill then, he will not goe out of himselfe, nor cleave to or follow the **L O R D I E S U S C H R I S T** fully.

Now then, the other humiliation is defective in this, in that it is not in this manner enough bottomed, it cuts not a man wholly off from himselfe, the foundation is not laid low enough ; there is wanting *depth of earth*, there is indeed so much earth as shall bring forth a greene blade of profession, and such a foundation as there may bee erected a slight building upon, but it is not low enough to beare a substantiall building that shall stand out all windes and weathers. This true humiliation hath these two things goe with it.

A man sees no bottome in himselfe:

Seeth a bottom out of himselfe to stand upon, and so hee casts himselfe upon that, clasps about Christ, and wholly adhereth unto him, and so drawes

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202262

draws all sap and life from him, as the branch doth from the roote, and thence comes that resolution and ability to cleave to the Lord, and to please him in all things.

As the resolution to doe it, so all his ability to goe through with it; for being joyned to **CHRIST**, there comes the spirit of *grace* (cal'd the vertue of **CHRIST**'s death, because it workes a vertue like unto his death) into the heart: But when the heart is not yet in this manner broken, many take up purposes and good desires, but are not able to keepe them, because they were bottomed on their owne strength; whereas if the heart were broken from it selfe and engrafted into **CHRIST**, such purposes made in his strength would strive and grow there: For if the soile bee made good, and fit plants bee planted in it, it is certaine they will thrive. Now in a good heart those desires that bee planted there doe thrive, and wither no more, and though there may now and then waves arise, and so they may bee tossed to and fro; yet substantially they doe not wither nor fall from the foundation: Those therefore who have begun a good course for a yeare or a moneth, and goe not on in it, it is a signe they want humbling: Hee that is truely humbled, falls backe no more: *Manasses* did not, nor *Saint Paul*, *Lord what wilt thou have mee doe, said hee then?* and hee was as good as his word. Therefore take knowledge you that doe fall away, what the defect hath beene and wherein: for that will bee a meanes to set you right and recover you againe.

3.

3 Property of Humiliation is, to have all the affections

fections moderate, all delights in worldly things faint and remisse, and all his affections taken chiefly up about grace and sinne: True affection in him will eat up the false: He esteemeth spirituall things at a high rate, and all other things as little. Aske such an one what of all things else he would desire, and he will tell you, Christ, and the favour of God, and the graces of the Spirit, and to have his lusts mortified and his sinnes pardoned, and that hee passeth not for the things of this life, hee cares not in comparison whether hee bee poore or rich, bond or free, (notwithstanding if he may have a better condition, hee will use it rather) as a man that is condemned to die; little regards hee his estate or the things of this life, his apprehensions are taken up with greater things; give him his pardon, and take all else: So here one truly humbled, counts the favour of God so great, as hee esteems all things else light in comparison: When therefore men are violent in their affections towards worldly things and in their desires and delights in them, and endeavours after them, it is a signe they are not humbled.

4 Property is to love God and Christ much, *Mary loved much, because much was forgiven her*; that is, not simply that much was forgiven her, but because withal she had a lease of it, apprehended it as much, and her sin great by a worke of humiliation, and so apprehended it a great matter to be pardoned. And so a man having once apprehended death and hell, and the wrath of God as belonging to him, and God comes on a suddaine and tells him, *thou shalt live*, when his necke was on the blocke, and hee expected

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202262

pected nothing but death; this causeth a man to love God much, and to prize CHRIST; and this made S. Paul also to love CHRIST so much, that the love of CHRIST constrained him, because *I was a persecuter and a blasphemer*, and he died for me, forgave mee a great debt.

5 Hee that is truly humbled will bee content with any condition, as the Prodigall sonne, *I am content to bee as an hired servant*, sayes hee, *and am unworthy to bee called a son any more*; hee was content to doe the worke of a servant, to live in the condition of a servant, to have the lowest place in all the familie. And so Saint Paul look'd on himselfe as *the least of all the Saints*, thought hee could never lay himselfe low enough. Now this contentednesse is exercised about two things.

1. In a contentednesse in the want of these outward good things; when a man is content with the meaneſt ſervices and the leaſt wages, to want wealth, and credit and gifts, as *Jacob* being truly humbled, *I am leſſe than the leaſt of thy mercies*: whereas an other man that is not humbled, when hee lookes upon himſelfe and GOD's mercies hee enjoyes hee thinking highly of himſelfe, thinks himſelfe too big for them, and that the diſproportion is rather on his ſide; whereas *Jacob* though hee then had many mercies, yet ſaid, take the leaſt mercies, and lay it in one ſcale, and my ſelfe in another, and I am too light for it, leſſe than it, and it too much for mee.

2 It is exercised in bearing crosses. One that is truly humbled ſtill *bleſſeth God*, as *Iob*, and beares and accepteth the puniſhment of his iniquity willingly
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and chearefully, as we see it made a condition, *Lev. 26. 41. If their uncircumcised heart bee humbled, and they beare or accept the punishment of their iniquity, if the Lord lay upon him a sharpe disease (say the plague, disreputation, poverty) yet hee beareth it willingly and chearefully; for when a man thinkes in earnest that which is said Ezech. 36. that hee is worthy to bee destroyed, whatsoever befalls him from God which is lesse than destruction, hee blesteth God for it, and rejoyceth that hee escapeth so.*

The humble man therefore is in all conditions contented, alwayes chearefull and blessing God; if hee hath good things, they are more than he is worthy of; if evill, though never so sharpe, yet they are lesse than destruction, and then hee deserves, when as an unbroken heart is always turbulent, and thinks in the secret murmurings of his heart, that hee is not well dealt with.

I should come now to the application of this Doctrin; but before I must resolve a case and scruple, which doth use to trouble the hearts of many. *Case.*

The Case in question is, whether to right and true Humiliation, it be necessary that such a solemne Humiliation and such a measure of sorrow and violent Legall contrition goe before it.

There is a double kind of sorrow wrought in the hearts of men; the one is a violent tumultuous sorrow, which ariseth from the apprehension of hell and punishment: the ground whereof is selfe-love, and is commonly in those who are suddainely enlightened, and so amazed therewith being taken on the suddaine; as wee see in Saint Paul who was taken *Ans.*

202262

ken suddainely as hee was going to *Damascus* : and it was discovered to him, that hee was guilty of so great a sinne, as hee could never have imagined, a voice from heaven to strike his eares on the suddaine, *why persecutest thou me?* And this wee finde by experience to have beene in many who never have true Humiliation, as wee see in *Judas*. God indeed sometimes useth it to bring men to true Humiliation, as hee did in Saint *Paul*.

But again we find in experience in some a cleaving to God, and holinesse of life, and a constant care to please him in all things, without this violent vexing sorrow : and many that have had their hearts deeply wounded, amazed, affrighted and have thereupon taken up great purposes which have come to nothing, the ground whereof having beene a violent passion, as that the roote withered, so the fruit withered also ; but a true apprehension and conviction of sinne ; as in it selfe the greatest misery is more reall and drawes the heart nearer to Christ ; so that in this case we may say of these two sorts, as Christ said of those who were bidden to goe into the vineyard : *They that said they would goe, did not, and others that said they would not goe, yet went* : and therefore wee answer, that it is not alwayes necessary to have such a violent sorrow, or that a man should lie any long time in such an evident sence of wrath, though alwayes there is a right apprehension of sin which doth humble a man : which will appeare by these considerations.

1.

That is not alwayes the greatest sorrow that is thus *violent* : though it seeme to bee so, it is not alwayes

wayes the greatest sorrow which melteth into reares; as that is not the greatest joy that discovers it selfe in laughter; that is not the greatest sorrow which workes the most violent commotion in the heart; there is a sad silent quiet sorrow that sinketh deeper, that wets more slowly, and sokes into the heart, and makes the heart more fruitfull in the issue, which ariseth out of a more spirituall conviction of Iudgement, of the evill of sinne; though lesse passion accompanies it, yet a stronger and deeper affection of sorrow is wrought. I call it deeper, because it is more constant and lasting, more to purpose; the one being as a land-flood, the other as a spring.

Put the case, such a violent sorrow should bee greater, yet it is not alwayes alike necessary, neither on Gods part nor mans.

Not on mans part; as some disease doth not need so sharpe and quick a medicine as an other, as some mens flesh is harder to heale than others, so some mens hearts have more stubbornenesse in them than others; some have made themselves children of the Divell by their wicked courses, worse then they were at first; others in comparison are but as the children of *Adam*, still as they were borne, and therefore the same worke may bee wrought in them, with much lesse adoe.

On Gods part it is not alwayes so necessary, but is proportioned to Gods ends; and God differs and is various in his ends concerning men.

He meanes to bestow a greater measure of grace upon one then upon an other; and where he meanes to set a greater building, there he digges a lower founda-

foundation; hee meanes to use some as a meanes to comfort others, and therefore letteth them see and feele more the bitterneffe of sinne, that they may be able to comfort others with the same comfort wherewith they have beene comforted.

2 Hee differs in the meanes to attaine his ends; if hee meanes to bring them to the same measure of grace, yet hee will not goe alwayes the same way to worke, as hee often doth that without affliction, which sometimes hee doth with it; as a man is brought to the same Haven divers wayes, some in a calme is tided in, others are driven in with a storme, but it is no matter how they come so they come in, the promise is made to those that come.

3 A third consideration is, that it is not for want of this greatnesse of humiliation, that divers have not so violent a sorrow, but from some circumstance in the worke it selfe; as,

1 First, because the light of comfort comes in sooner to some than to others; they have the salve presently after the wound is given: God having broken the heart bindeth it up presently againe, a man may have as deepe a wound which a mitigated medicine comming neare to the bottome of the disease and soone applyed may sooner heale than another lesse deepe, to which the remedie is not applyed a long time after, which therefore askes longer: So also it is in joy, suddainnesse increaseth it for a fit; for example, put case a man is condemned for high treason, and brought to the blocke, and verily expects death, and his pardon on the suddaine comes, there is such a great sensible change wrought in him
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(and our natures are sensible of great changes) and therefore how excessively doth hee rejoyce ! but take one who is guilty of the same fault, who knows that if hee have not his pardon, hee should loose his life, but hath his pardon presently after the sentence passed ; hee will prize his pardon as much as the other, though happily hee is not so turbulently affected as the other.

It falls out thus by reason of the ignorance some have lived in before, who therefore are enlightened to know their estates all on the suddaine ; whereas an other hath beene brought up in knowledge, and the knowledg of his misery being let in by degrees, then the case doth also differ, as betweene two men who were to goe through a wood, whereof one is set upon by theeves not suspecting any, and is put into a feare of his life, and knowes not how to escape, but one comes on the suddaine, and rescues him and gives him his life, but another is warned before, knowes hee must goe through such a passage, and that unlesse hee hath a strong guard to goe along with him, hee shall certainly perish ; this man apprehends the danger as great, as the other, and the benefit as great, and the love of him that should goe with him as great ; only his passion, either of feare or joy, is not so violent as the others, though hee truly rejoyceth in the deliverance as much as the other, and thinks himselfe as much bound to the man that delivered him.

I have spoken these things, because some are scrupulous in the point, and thinke they may not
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safely apply the Promise, because they have not had that measure of sorrow that others have had.

But let no man suffer his assurance to bee weakned for want of this, for a man may have as high an esteeme of **C H R I S T** and bee as throughly convinced of sinne though hee want that violent worke, which **G O D** workes in some, even a great sence of his wrath, and letting them lie there and then speakes peace, so as these are wrought by distinct acts and causes in a great distance one from the other, so that as their sorrow was evident so their joy was evident, in another hee workes so, that as soone as hee sees sinne hee sees **G O D** also pardoning.

And in those that have that violent shyning of affection in their first Humiliation; looke how much of it is violent, will vanish, and what is substantiall, will hold; so that even they in the end come to this solid conviction of Iudgement at last, which onely is constant, and abideth with them. And therefore let not thy assurance bee weakned for the want of this, for faith unites to **C H R I S T** and establisheth us in well doing.

Object.

But you will say, is it not good to get that sensible stirring sence and sight of sinne?

Answ.

I answere, yes, for to that end **G O D** leads through crosses, and suffers thee to fall into sinnes, that thou mayest see the vanity of the creature and the sinfulness of thy nature, that when thou comest to Heaven thou mayest say by thy owne experience, it was not by my owne righteousness that I came

came hither : And therefore though it be good to get it, yet let God goe his owne way and use his owne manner of working, whether by Legall terror or otherwise, what he sees good for thee he will doe to humble thee, but doe thou use meanes to understand the Law, thy owne heart and actions, and as thou art fallen into new sinnes, labour to see what a case thou shouldst be in, if Christ had not delivered thee : But let not thy assurance bee weakned, for you must know there are but two maine ends of humiliation, which if they bee attained in thee, thou needest not call in question thy estate : Now first it serves to make thee willing to match with Christ: Wee are Christs spokes-men, and woo you every Sabbath day, but wee finde all the world like them who thinke themselves beautifull and rich and that they have matches enow, who though they are contented to have Christ for their husband in Heaven, yet not on the earth with all those crosses they must take him with.

Now humiliation comes and makes men willing, when a man comes to see and say, I have no such thing in mee as I imagined, no riches, &c. but I am in debt, and shall be arrested and laid in prison, and my life must goe for it, unlesse Christ will marry me; in that a man sees hee shall bee kept from all arrests by him, this makes a man willing to match with Christ, yea glad, though he have many crosses follow in this life upon the marriage. Now therefore if thou findest this wrought that thou canst sincerely say, I am willing to take Christ, and to bee subject to him in all things to follow him in all

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202262

conditions, to give a full consent to take him, as I finde that he in the word hath a full consent to take mee; then certainly thou art humbled, else not; if thou hadst taken him onely in a fit, and not out of Iudgement, thou wouldest have repented thee ere now.

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The second end w^{ch} Humiliation serves to is for Sanctification, as the other helpt him in his Iustification, that every unruly lust may be broken and mortified in thee; that thou mightest feare to offend and bee plyable to the Lord in every thing; whereas another that is unbroken quarrells with every thing, thinkes his worke too much, and his wages too little, and knowes not why he should goe a contrary way to the world, but an humbled man will doe all this chearefully, like a broken Horse that turnes at every check of the bridle, when another casts his Rider: Doest thou finde that thou tremblest at the word, and fearest sinne, and darest not venture in it, and so for duties thou darest not neglect them; and this thou hast experience of in the whole course of thy life? then surely this worke of humiliation hath beene in thy heart: Though thou seest not the fire, yet if thou findest the heate, it hath beene there: for these are the effects of it, and as I speake this for the comfort of those that have not felt such violent sorrows, so let me on the contrary say to others, who (it may bee) have had such fits of sorrow, yet if thou finde an unwillingnes to submit thus to CHRIST, findest thy necke stiffe to the Lords yoke, and such an unbrokennes in thee, that thou canst not live without satisfying this or that

that lust, but canst sin and beare it out well enough, let thy sorrow have beene never so great, and now they are past and gone, and were not right; let men therefore examine themselves by the effects, for men are deceived on both sides: and then,

I Use is for exhortation to stirre up to the dutie: This exhortation I direct to two sorts of men; first to those who are already truly humbled, and secondly to strangers to it.

First you that are already humbled and have obtained the assurance of the forgivenesse of your sins, you must bee humbled more, for if the Lord suspend his promise at this, then the dutie is to be done daily: When God requires a dutie of Sanctification (and his promises are made onely to such) there can bee none excuse, there may bee a let in preparative humiliation; a man may bee *swallowed of two much sorrow*: but not in this which is a dutie of sanctification: and know this, that all degrees of grace arise from the degrees of this true Humiliation: which I make good to you thus; Faith and Love are the great radicall graces, all else are but branches springing out of them. Now they are strengthened by this humiliation, and graces the more they grow there is an addition still made to them; as there is an addition made to our humiliation.

First for Faith, know that the more strongly a man layes hold on CHRIST and prizeth him, the more hee goes on to apprehend his sinne, and is emptied of himselfe; and though a man tooke CHRIST truly at his first conversion, yet there are degrees of prizing him; when a husband takes a

202262

wife, though at their first marriage there was such love betweene them as they would have chosen each other before any other in the world, yet so as this their love may admit degrees; after marriage, they may see more grounds of loving each other more, so that though the match is made, yet they may be more confirmed in their choice, which may be made more full and absolute: So towards Christ the will and affections may be wound up to a higher peg, which is done by a further degree of humiliation. What is faith, but a laying hold of Christ? Now the emptier the hand is, the further hold it takes, and the more we are taken off our owne bottome, the further wee will cleave to Christ. A man in a river that is like to bee drowned, and hath a rope cast to him, he will be sure to catch as fast hold as hee can, you shall not need to bid him. And to this end it is, that Christians are still taught more and more, by the Spirit to see the vanity of the creature, the vilenesse of their natures; and they are led through this wilderness to humble them, that so Christ may have the higher place in their hearts.

Againe, the greater the thirst is, the greater will a mans draught bee; and the more you add to your humiliation, the more will your thirst be after *Christ*, and you will drinke deeper of the fountaine of life, and draw more sap from him.

2 And secondly it increaseth your love, for thereby wee come to see our selves more beholding to God, as having a greater debt forgiven us. What made *Mary* love much, but because shee was sensible *much was forgiven her*. Therefore labour more
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and more to bee humbled, especially as you fall into new finnes, which the L O R D oft lets his to doe, that they might bee humbled more: and the more light a Christian gets to discover his owne vilenesse and the vanity of the creature, the stronger hee will grow in grace, and the more established in well doing.

Now secondly for those who are strangers to this grace of Humiliation; that they may come to be humbled, let them observe these two rules. First labour to see the greatnesse of sinne. Secondly to see your owne weaknes and inability to helpe your selves; for the first, doe not weigh sin by common opinion, but in a right ballance, doe not doe with your soules as some doe with their bodies; when their beautie is decayed, they desire to hide it from themselves by false glasses, and from others by painting; so doe wee for the most part with our finnes; wee desire to hide them from our selves by putting false glosses upon them, and from others by fained excuses: but deale impartially with your selves herein, and labour to see sinne in its full vilenesse: And that you may doe so,

First pitch upon some one great sin, and take it into consideration. So Christ, when he would humble *Paul* he tells him of his persecution, *Why persecutest thou me?* And so *S. Peter*, when he would humble the Iewes *Acts 2.1.* he tels them of their crucifying of Christ: So Christ when hee would humble the Woman, *Iohn 4.* he remembers her of her adultery: And the method that G O D takes when hee would humble us, it is good for us to take: For as when a

202262

man goes to rub a great staine out of a cloath, by the same labour hee rubs out others, that are the lesse, for my meaning is, not that you should let other finnes alone, when I exhort you to single out me; but to consider all particulars else also, though never so small: the multitudes of them will helpe to humble thee, as well as the greatnesse: When a man sees hee hath many debts though but small, of sixpences and shillings; yet being many, the totall summe may arise to a great quantity, and make a man see himselfe bankrupt: Therefore set your finnes in order before you, give the due weight to every sin, but yet especially let great sins bee in your eye. Now some finnes are greater in their owne nature, as fornication, I wearing, drunkennesse, &c. others are made great by their circumstances, as that they were committed against knowledge, with deliberation, as *Saul sparing the Amalekites*, and sacrificing before *Samuel* came, wherein a commandment to the contrary was distinctly given. So God aggravated to *Adam* his sinne, *did not I command thee the contrary?* and didst thou not know thou shouldst not? We are not to take sins by number onely, but also by weight: as when they were committed contrary to many promises, purposes, and so as hardness of heart followed upon it.

- 2 And secondly, withall labour to make sins present, though long since committed; looke on them as if they were newly done: for though our finnes be great, yet if we apprehend them and view at a distance, and a great way off, they move us not: Which is the reason why men are not more affected with

with the thought of death, in their health, which yet is one of the greatest evils, and so apprehended by us when we come to dye: the reason is, because it is then conceived to be a farre off, and so men are not moved with it. Thus is it in our apprehension of sins also: the distance makes them seeme small; there is not a neare conjunction and application of the object and the affection, they are not brought nigh, but men looke upon sinnes long since past as small, whereas in truth sins long since committed are the same in themselves and in the sight of God they were when first committed; and therefore should bee the same to thee. So a man that hath committed a treason twenty yeares agoe, may be executed for it now: and therefore *Iosephs* brethren remembred their sin as fresh, though long before committed, as if they had then committed it: their affliction revived in their consciences, and made it as present: but we usually looke on sins past as none of ours. *Iob* saith, that the **L O R D** *made him possesse the sinnes of his youth*: he possessed them, that is looked on them as his owne. What is the reason why to men in jeopardy, as in a storme at Sea, and in the time of sicknesse their sins then appeare so terrible and fearefull? they apprehend them as present. Now that w^{ch} *God* doth by affliction, let us labour to get done by meditation, and by faith to looke on them as present; turne that end of the opticke glasse which will bring them neare to thee, labour to have a true Iudgement of their greatnesse, and that they are the same, for therein lyes true humiliation, when the Iudgement is rightly convinced to esteeme

esteeme them the greatestt evill, though it bee not accompanied with so violent and turbulent a sorrow.

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When you have made them thus present, doe not quickly make an end, but let sorrow abide upon your hearts, for the worke is not so soone done ; you will get into some rocke or other, unlesse you be continually persecuted and followed by the apprehension of your sins, till you come unto the Citty of refuge : but doe as *David* did *Psal.* 51. he set his *sin before him* ; and as *Saint Paul*, to whom that sin of persecution was ever fresh in his memory and alwayes in his mouth, *I a persecutor, &c.* In this case learne something of the Devill, who when he would bring a man to be swallowed up of sorrow, his manner is to keepe a mans sin still before him, nor will he let a man be at rest, therefore *2 Cor.* 12. they are called *the buffetings of Sathan*, because he comes often with blow after blow, to discourage and amaze a man : now learne from that practise of his to stay and dwell upon the meditations of our sins, and often to present them to our soules. Thy greene wood happily will not burne without much blowing : it is *frequens & intensior argumentatio*, a frequent pressing of arguments that workes on the affections ; and so here keepe the object neare the faculty, and at last it will worke : look not on thy sins by fits, let there be no interruption by worldly joyes or pleasures, no *intervalla* : and this is *Saint Iames* counsell, *Be afflicted, and mourne and weepe. Iames 4. Let your laughter be turned into mourning, and your joy into heavinesse : humble your selves,*

selves, &c. that is, if you will have your hearts humbled, abstaine from lawfull delights for the time, get alone. So *Isa* 2. he bids them set apart a day, that they might have no interruption; and if that will not doe it, sanctifie another; let not one sparke goe out ere another be stricke; otherwise you will be alwayes beginning and never come to be humbled.

If you would come to lay your sins to heart, and be affected with them; then be sure you be not kept off by those false reasonings and excuses, which hinder men from being humbled, and keepe their sins from comming in upon them: as for instance; when a man comes to consider of his sins, ay but says he, am I not in a good estate already? and then my sins are pardoned; for I have good desires in me and a good meaning, I mean no man no harme; and thus these keepe him from seeing himselfe a child of wrath: but consider, that thou maist have all these good things in thee, and more then these, and yet be a child of wrath; these will be found to the praise of the Holy Ghost who wrought them in thee, but not to thy advantage to escape damnation; for though these be in thee, yet they have not that full effect they should, for they overcome not that evill that is in thee: for notwithstanding all these good things thou art still a Sabbath profaner, a drunkard given to Company. I might goe over all other sins; but in a word; if they overcome not every sin, they are nothing for the saving thee; if they had beene effect all in thee, they would have driven out the darkenesse; all the good things thou
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hast availe not to thy salvation; because they make thee not a good man; yea all these good things and the good fits thou hast had, will helpe forward thy condemnation: because thou hast prophaned the truth in thy heart, and hast not put fuell to these sparkes, which God in mercy did put in: that thou shouldest suffer such Talents as these to lye hid in a Napkin, will hee not say, thou art an unprofitable servant?

A second thing that is to be added to the sight of your sins to humble you; is to know that misery and vanity that is in your selves; we see by experience that men will graunt that they are great sinners, but what is the reason, that yet notwithstanding they stand out?

They doe not know their owne misery and vanity, and though we have preached to men againe and againe their misery; yet they are not stirred: but when death comes, then they are humbled, and why, but because then they see what God is, and what themselves are; death shewes them the vanity of the Creature: so that the way to bee humbled, is to know how unable a man is to be happy within his owne compasse. And to this end consider:

1 First, the greatnesse of God and his power, and the terrours of the Almighty, that he is that God in whose hands is thy life and wayes, and all: and consider, that unlesse thou seriously lay thy sins to heart; this God is thy enemy, and him with whom for ever thou hast to doe.

2 Consider what a weake creature thou art; thinke with

with thy selfe ; a sicknesse may come on my body, a crosse may come on my estate, yea an apprehension on my soule, that may sucke up the marrow of my bones ; and above all, I have an immortall soule in a vessell of clay ; and thinke when that glasse, that shell is broke, what will become of that poore soule of thine : And this would bring a man to the *Prodigalls* case. *Belshazzar* saw this, when he saw the hand writing upon the wall. Had it not beene wisdom in him to have seene and acknowledged it before ? Thou art well now ; thou doest not know what alterations may befall thee in the yeare, and thou hadst better leave a thousand businesses undone, then this.

And yet thirdly, all this will not doe it, except the spirit of God come on thee : to humble a man is a mighty worke. Though *Eliab* should preach to you, yea all the *sonnes of thunder* should come, yet without the spirit, they will not be able to humble you ; yea God himselfe came downe from heaven, upon Mount *Sinai*, and with what terrours ? and yet the people remained unbroken, though they were amazed for a time. When Christ spake to Saint *Paul* and stricke him off his horse, if he had not a light within as well as without, he had not beene humbled ; nor the *Taylor* if there had not been an earthquake in his heart, as well as in the earth. *Ieroboam* had as great a miracle wrought before him as Saint *Paul* : you may well thinke the drying up of his hand amazed him, yet made him not give over his sinne ; and what was the reason ? there was a miracle in both, but not the spirit : and if we did

did worke miracles before you, from day to day ; yet unlesse God sent his spirit of bondage upon you, you would not be humbled. See the necessity of the spirits helpe in admonitions also. *Amaziah* was admonished by a Prophet as well as *David* by *Nathan*, yet he was not humbled : and so we see some are humbled by afflictions, and others not. Therefore pray that God would send his spirit to convince you, and learne also not to be offended at us, when in preaching the Law your consciences are troubled. It is the spirit that troubleth you ; else our words would not trouble you : and therefore be not angry at us : and therefore also doe not put off this duty of getting your hearts humbled ; for thou art not able so much as to humble thy selfe : therefore take the opportunities of the spirit, when he stirs thy heart.

Object.

But you will say, this rather discourageth us from the worke : for then we must ever waite like marriners, till the tide and the gale comes, and I had as good sit still : for I may goe about it to no purpose, seeing the Lord must doe it.

Ans.

I answer thee ; that if thou wouldest goe about it and shut up thy selfe in private a day, and after that another, in the end God would send his spirit. When Christ bad them goe and rowe, though they rowed all night to little purpose, yet Christ came at last, and they were on the other side presently ; it may be thou maiest be about it a moneth or two, ere thou findest the spirit coming ; yet he will come in the end, and then the worke will be throughly done ; for God hath made a promise of the Holy Ghost,

Ghost, that he will *baptize with the Holy Ghost as with fire*; not onely to his Disciples, but those that yet never had it: for it is not onely for encrease, but to begin grace. Yea if God hath given thee a heart to pray, to consider this promise, so as thou hast taken up a resolution to waite and to set thy selfe to the worke, when thou hast done so; the spirit is already in thine heart, the worke is begun, though thou thinkest not so; and never pleade thou canst not do it without the spirit; for I aske thee this question, didst thou ever commit a sin in which thou couldest say, I did it against my will? was there ever any duty which thou hadst a thought to doe, that thou couldest say, thou couldest not do it? thy heart tells thee no.

Therefore set about this duty which is the maine; which therefore we have prest much, because it is as a naile driven into a wall on which other graces hang. This and Faith are the great things which the master builders were occupied about, and indeed the foundation, which therefore above all you must looke to; and these our exhortations should bee as forked Arrowes to sticke in you, and not out againe, and not as other Arrowes that wound onely.

We have done with the negative part, *That such as doe not humble themselves have no interest in the promises.*

We come now to the affirmative part, which is for comfort; That if any man doth humble himselfe, God will heare his prayer, his sinnes shall bee forgiven, &c.

The

The Doctrine is this. *The Lord will be mercifull unto the humble.*

I had thought to have gone off sooner, but that the Supper of the Lord drawes neare; which time is a day of reconciliation; such as was that Feast the tenth day, in the seventh moneth, when the people all meeting together, *Aaron* the Priest, and confessed their sins over the scape Goate which fled into the wildernesse, which was a type of Christ taking away all our sins; and the same is done and represented when we receive the Sacrament. Now one condition required of the people at that time was, that they should *humble themselves*, and every soule that did not, was to be cut off, *Levit. 23. 27.* to the 30. verse, and that letting goe of the scape Goate was at the same time, appeares, *Leviticus 16. 20.* to the 31.

But to come to the point; the Scripture is plentiful to prove it, *Iames 4. 6.* *God giveth grace to the humble*, sanctifying grace, and also saving knowledge, *Psal. 25.* *He shewes his secrets unto the humble*, yea he dwelleth in such, *Esay 57. 15.* he hath an especiall eye to such: those eyes that runne through the whole earth finde themselves on the humble man for good, *Isay 62. 2.* *other things have my hand made*; (yet them he regards not in comparifon) *To him will I looke that is humble*: he promiseth also to *fill them with good things*, to give them preferment and honour, to *exalt the humble and meeke*; yea hee regards it so, that when evill men have humbled themselves, they have not gone away without some mercy; as when *Ahab* humbled himselfe,

2 Chron. 12. God promised he would not bring the evill in his days : and the best of Gods children when they have not humbled themselves, he hath withdrawne his favour from them, as he would not look on *David*, till he had humbled himselfe. All the world cannot keep an humble man down, nor all the props in the world cannot keepe a proud man up.

And what are the reasons why God respecteth humble men so?

An humble man giveth God all the glory, and *him that honoureth mee* (saith God) *I will honour*. Now an humble man doth as *Ioab* did. *Ioab* would not take the victory to himselfe, but sent for *David*; and it was the deepest policy that ever *Ioab* used: and so the Apostles, *Acts 3. know that Iesus hath made this man whole* : and it is the humble mans wisdom, in all actions not to set themselves up, but to say, no matter how I be regarded, so God be glorified; and God will honour such: therefore Christ in his prayer makes this a ground of being glorified by God, *Iohn 17. I have glorified thee on earth; now father glorifie me*. And so God will deale with his Saints in a proportion.

Reas. 1.

Humility keeps a man within his owne compassse; but pride lifts a man up above his proportion, it puts all out of joynt and breeds disorder, and that bringeth destruction; and therefore humility was defined by some of the Ancients to bee that which out of the knowledge of God and a mans selfe keeps a man to his owne bottome. That whereas a proud man lifts up himselfe above his measure, as a member in the body that swells, takes

Reas. 2.

up more roome then it should, and are as bubbles in the water, which should be plaine and smooth; but this brings all into its place againe, gives the Creator his due, and sets the creature where it should be, and therefore God loves it.

Reas. 3.

It makes a man sociable and usefull and profitable to others: a man would not have a stubborn horse, that will not goe in the teame with his fellowes, nor such high trees as overshadow others, and will not suffer them to grow by them, and bring forth no fruit themselves. A man will not keepe a Cow or an Oxe that is still a pushing; and such an one is a proud man: it is but, and onely the humble man that will live profitably amongst his neighbours, and will not goe beyond his owne Tedder.

Reas. 4.

An humble man hath such a frame of heart, as the LORD delights in; for hee is fearefull to offend, alwayes obedient, ready to doe any service, and is content with any wages; loves much, is abundant in thankfulness, and cleaves fast to the LORD, because he hath no bottome of his owne, and keepeth under his lusts, because he knowes the bitterness of sinne; resignes up his heart to the Lord to follow him in all things, hee is a man of the Lords desires; so it is said of *Daniel*, when he had humbled himselfe, *Dan. 9.* Such an one as the Lord would have; and so it makes him fit for favour; and when a man is fit for favour he shall be sure to have it, for God is not streight-handed to us.

Vse 1.

Hath the LORD said it, and that from heaven, that

that if a man doth humble himselfe hee will forgive him? Then this is a matter of great consolation; when I can say from G o d to any one here that droopes, that if thou doest and wilt humble thy selfe, the L o r d will forgive thee; consider it, this is newes from heaven.

Put the case (to compare spirituall things with things which you are more sensible of) that any of you had committed high treason against the King, and thou hadst forfeited thy life and goods; if any one should come from the King to thee, and tel thee, that if thou wouldest goe to him and humble thy selfe it should be pardoned: And is not our case the same? Wee are guilty of eternall death, and have forfeited life and all: when therefore G o d himselfe shall say, *If thou wilt humble thy selfe, thy sinnes shall bee forgiven*, what comfort is it? such a word as this should not be lost. A man that knowes the bitternesse of sinne, would waite and waite againe to gain such a word as this from the L o r d s mouth, and would keepe it as his life. It was not a light thing to get such a word as this from G o d, none but a favorite could get it, nay none but his Sonne, and hee not, but by his death; if C H R I S T had not provided this Charter for us, every man should have dyed in his sinnes. Now this we can and doe say from G o d through C H R I S T, that though your sinnes be great, and you have fallen into them many a time and comitted them with the worst of circumstances; yet if thou humblest thy selfe, thou shalt bee forgiven; so as thou mayest say, I may challenge God of his promise, and put this bond in

suite and hee cannot deny it. This is a great matter; if a man shall but seriously consider, what it is to have this great God, the Governor of the World, to bee an enemy, one would thinke they should thinke this Gospell good newes.

But you will say, I doe yet neither know distinctly what it is to humble my selfe, neither can I humble my selfe; there is not a harder thing then it is. Therefore I will shew it you once againe, that you may know it, for why should wee not in so great a point turne it every way, and mould it for your use, and to your apprehensions, as also that you may not thinke it harder then it is, by which the Diuell keeps many off.

Now you may know what it is by the expressions of those who have humbled themselves. *David* having numbred the people, when hee humbled himselfe he said, *Lord I have sinned and done exceeding foolishly. Iosiah his heart melted before the Lord. And Dan. 9. Lord wee have done very wickedly &c. and shame belongs to us:* hee was ashamed. And *Iob* when hee humbled himselfe, said, *Lord, I abhor my selfe in dust and ashes.* And the Prodigall, *I have sinned against heaven and against thee, and am no more worthy to bee called thy sonne.* And so they are said to bee weary and heavie laden. Many other expressions there are, but I will digest all into two heads; to humble a mans selfe is but to bring his heart and minde unto these two acts.

Is out of a sence of a mans unworthynesse to say thus unto the Lord: *Oh Lord, I have done exceeding wickedly, and am worthy to bee destroyed.* I have beene
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in the wrong way, and done exceeding foolishly ; but thy wayes are righteous, and thou art just : yea I have dealt unthankfully and unequally with thee , who hast beene so good to me. That was it melted the heart of *Iosiah*, and made *Iob* abhorre himselfe; as vile as the dust I tread upon , as ashes that are good for nothing , or but as sackcloth (in which they used to humble themselves , the worst of garments, I am ashamed and confounded. This is the first act which is a sence and an acknowledgement of our owne unworthinesse and vilenesse. And the second a sight of a mans worthinesse to bee destroyed, inability to helpe himselfe, and of the vanity of all things else. A man must further say , that I am not onely unworthy, but guilty of death ; my sinnes will breake my backe ; I am not able to stand under them , and I am utterly undone ; and when I looke upon all the props of my life, my health, and riches, &c. I see they are but vaine things , reeds and feathers , and as hollow ground whereon I can set no footing : Therefore LORD , bee thou a rocke to mee , on whom I may pitch and build my selfe. And that this sight of our owne inability is also necessary we see by that *1 Tim. 6. 17.* *Charge them that are rich , that they bee not high minded, nor trust in uncertaine riches ;* they are both joyned together: For so farre as a man doth trust in them, he is high minded ; and the soule of man doth trust in them so long as it apprehends substance in them, and that they are not vanity, so farre the heart beares it selfe upon them , and so is carelesse of the Lord ; and why else doe afflictions humble men , as *Manasses*, but

because a man then sees the emptinesse of all things, it brings him to say with the Prodigall, *I dye for hunger*, and these cannot feed mee, and so to hold fast to the Lord: which a man must needs doe, when he hath but one thing to hold to. Now when thou art wrought on so as to expresse this unfainedly, this is it, to humble thy selfe.

Use 2.

Wee should hence learne to strengthen our faith; if wee have done this, if thou hast thus humbled thy selfe, confessed thy finnes, taken up a full resolution to forsake them; thou shalt have mercy, according to that promise *Pro. 28. 13. Hee that confesseth and forsaketh, shall have mercy.*

But here we find those who have humbled themselves come in with two objections, that hinder their comfort.

1 That they cannot mourne for their sins. 2 That they fall into the same finnes againe and againe, and that therefore they have not humbled themselves. Now as we would not have the false deceived with false evidences, so nor the true discomfited, and therefore wee will answer these objections. To the first,

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If thou beeest so farre convinced in thy Indgement of thy sin, and misery; and inability to helpe thy selfe, as it hath turned the bent and rudder of thy will, so as thou sayest, I will goe and humble my selfe to my Father, change my course, confesse and forsake my finnes; though thy affections seeme to thee stirred, yet this is enough to translate thee into the estate of grace: for I aske, to what end is mourning and weeping required, but to awaken a
man

man, to come home to God, in this manner mentioned : when therefore thou findest these effects, thou maiest be sure thou hast the end of these, and that is enough to save thee. Suppose a man carries about him a deadly disease, so as upon the discovery, and knowledge of it he is content to part with all he hath to the Physitians, and is wary of meddling with any meate that will hurt him and increase it ; if he know this that it is deadly, though he hath no sence of paine, it is all one, (and there are some diseases you know, wherein a man fees not so much paine, that yet are mortall) it may make him as carefull to use the meanes : and so it is here ; if the conviction of the sinfulness and deadliness of sinne worke those dispositions mentioned in thee, then thou hast the end which mourning tends to, and that is all one.

Though thy affections be not so stirred, consider the promises are made to ones comming in, and taking Christ, and beleeving in him : they are not made to the commotion of the affections : and here in the words the promise is made to, humbling thy selfe out of a solidity of Iudgement. It is no matter by what meanes you are brought to take hold on Christ, so you come to him. It is all one whether I come to my journeys end by land, or by water, on horse backe or on foote, so I be come thither.

If thou findest thou doest the things that an humble man should doe, then though thy affections seeme not to be moved, yet in very deed they are moved and changed : as if thou art fearefull to re-

turne to thy finnes, art resolved to please God in all things to thy power. For what are affections, but divers positions and scituations of the will and the feete it walkes upon : they are but the divers motions and inclinations whereby the will shoots it selfe into the objects of it. Now looke which way thy will is resolved, and set : that way are thy affections set also : if thou seekest oae to rise up soone and goe to bed late, to avoyde poverty, and to get riches, a wise man will assure himselfe that his ayme is such, and his heart set upon riches ; his actions shew that his affections doe move strongly that way, though he sayes, he feesles no such stirradge. Therefore though thou findest this stilnesse of affections, yet if thou doest the same things that they use to doe, who mourne and weepe more; thou mayest assure thy selfe thy affections are moved.

I adde this, that it is no wound, if thy affections be not so sensibly stirred, and yet thy humiliation bee found ; for it is the nature of the affections to shoote into their owne objects stilly, and to runne along as water and winde doth ; if they meete with no obstacle to runne quietly, if it meetes with trees, then the winde riseth, and if the tide meete with the winde, then the waves rise ; so if our affections be crossed, we are sure to heare of them then : if thou hadst not some hopefull assurance of thy estate, thou wouldest heare of mourning and drooping ; then it may be the worke of grace in thee hath alwayes gone evenly on, the streame hath runne calmely and quietly ; but yet such doe
finde

finde that upon some suddaine accidents or draw-ings nigh, when the **L O R D** is pleased to make an impression upon them, then they heare of stirring affections.

But (to conclude all) know and resolve upon it, that the flowing and ebbing of thy affections is not that which thy salvation depends upon, but solidity of conviction of Iudgement which turnes the will, and makes thee to cleave fast unto Christ.

Whereas you object you fall into the same sins againe and againe; I answer, you may fall againe and againe, and into great sins, for which you have been soundly humbled: why should we speake that which the Scripture doth not? onely take it with this caution, that you find a constant warre against them, as *Israel* with the *Amalekites*, so as never to yield to looke upon their sinnes, as a mans greatest enemy, never to be reconciled though he be foiled againe and againe: for what is true humiliation, but to reckon sin the greatest misery? and indeed if a man reckon any greater, as losse of wealth, &c. then a man had rather fall into sinne then lose his wealth; whence it is that falsenesse of heart doth arise: but humiliation makes a man to reckon sinne such an evill, as he had rather suffer any thing than make a truce with sinne: and the generall ordinary power of grace in a mans ordinary whole course is not scene in keeping men from relapses altogether, but in setting sin and the heart at oddes, as health and sicknesse; whilst a man is a living man he cannot

not be friends with any disease but nature will resist it, it sets them at variance, as the Wolfe and the Lambe, as the spring and mudde, and living waters will cleanse themselves, though the mudde arise a thousand times, if as the Wolfe which reckons the Lambe the greatest enemy it hath in the world by an instinct of nature, so if thou reckonest sinne the most destroying thing in the world, whence is this but because humiliation hath made that impression and apprehension of it on thy heart ; which God hath set on thy heart as a brand in the flesh that will never out, then thou wilt fight against every sinne and never be reconciled to it, as a Lambe is not to a Wolfe, because nature hath implanted that enmity there ; if thou finde this bee the constant disposition of thy minde , keepe thy assurance strong, though many weakenesses be discovered in thee ; It is utterly a fault among you to weaken your assurance by your daily slippings and failings, and Sathan labours that above all other, for then when your assurance and hope is gone, you walke unevenly, and are as a Ship that hath lost her Anchor, or is without a Rudder : thou mayest sometimes feele a hardnesse in thee, and yet if this afore-said bee the constant disposition of thy minde ; Weaken not thy assurance, but say, though I finde my heart hard and carelesse, froward and angry often, whereas I should bee meeke and humble ; Yet I will not question the maine , but I will goe and renew my humiliation, which will strengthen my assurance ; how ever, hold that firme, for it drawes into nearer Communion with God, and further

further from sinne establisheth a man in well-doing, and makes him abound in the worke of the Lord.

Learne hence also, that it is not enough for a man only to be patient in afflictions, but he must also humble himselfe under them, wee must not onely beare the crosse, but willingly and cheerefully acknowledge Gods justice in it, and our owne sinne, for to bee humbled is a further thing then to bee patient, as in *2 Chron. 12. 6.* when the people were left in the hand of *Shishak*, it is said, that *the Princes of Israel humbled themselves, and they said, the Lord is righteous*, where being humbled, is expressed by acknowledging God to be righteous, which is more then to bee patient, God lookes for this in all afflictions, therefore he sayes in *1 Pet. 5. 6.* *humble your selves* (and not bee patient onely) *under the mighty hand of God, that hee may exalt you in due time.* Many a man in affliction may say, hee will bee patient; but that is not enough, but hee must humble himselfe, which is more then patience; for patience is only to beare it contentedly, but a man must goe to God, and say, Lord I confesse I am sinfull and have deserved more then this punishment, I wonder not at thy judgment but at thy long suffering rather, that it is no worse with mee, the least of Saints and the greatest of sinners. So wee see it was with *Naomi* in *Ruth 1. 20, 21.* call me not by an honorable name, not *Naomi*, but *Marah*; *I went out full, but I am come home empty, and the Lord hath afflicted mee*; and seeing hee hath afflicted mee, I will carry my saile accordingly. This is truly to humble

Vse. 3.

humble a mans selfe. And thus did *David*, when hee fled before *Absolon*, *Let the Lord doe with mee what seemes good in his eyes.* 2 Sam. 15 26. And so said *Eli*, *In all this the Lord is good*, that is, the Lord is just in all this, and I and my sonnes deserve it, and more. Thus when a man thinkes it reasonable that God should punish him, hee blesteth God that the crosse is no greater, without complaining or repining. If the Lord will leade thee through variety of conditions, say with *Paul*, *I know how to want, and how to abound*, and how to goe through bad report as well as good report; and I am not onely content, but chearefull in all this, and would bee, if it were farre worse.

Vse 4.

If the Lord hath said hee will bee mercifull to the humble, then let us humble our selves more and more and get our hearts lower and lower, seeing there are such mighty and large promises belonging to the humble, and know that as the Lord suspends his promises upon this here, so they shall bee fulfilled upon the performance of this, and as wee doe this more or lesse, so shall the promises be fulfilled to us more or lesse, therefore let us doe this more and more, for if wee humble our selves, the Lord will fill our hearts with good things; when hee sees a man taking a low place, hee will say sit up higher, all the world cannot hold downe an humble man, because the Lord setteth to his hand to raise him up, neither keepe up a proud man because the Lord setteth himselfe to depresse and debase them, when the wall swells it is not like to stand long, when a joynt is luxated and swelled, till the swelling abate, it cannot

not bee saved and set, he hath *respect to the low estate of his handmaiden*, so saith *Mary* the blessed Virgin, *Luke 1.48.* So hee dealt with *Naomi*, hee was long in humbling her, and then raised her up; so with *Iob*, when hee was humbled, then God doubled his estate: thus God deales with the humble and that constantly, hee never does any great things for any man, till hee hath first humbled him; how much was *Ioseph* humbled, ere hee made that promise to him that the Sunne, Moone, and Starres should bow to him, that is, his father, and mother and brethren, should obey him, and yet againe before God made good these promises to him, what a doe there was to humble him further? which doubtlesse made him more to prize these mercies, and so more thankfull to God for them. So also in his glorious appearance to *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Iacob*, hee would still before hand humble them, and make them low by some affliction or other still before hee would make any gracious promises to them. When *Iacob* was flying from the face of his brother and was in great streights and so made low in his owne eyes, then did God first appeare to him: when a man is humbled, it is the next doore to preferment one way or other. Therefore it should be our wisdom to humble our selves more and more, since there is so much benefit to bee gotten by it. *Prov. 22.4.* *By humility and the feare of the Lord are riches, and honours, and life:* the rule holds constant, the Lord makes it good; let a man be humble, and feare God too, that is, allow himselfe in no sinne, and the Lord will make it good one way or other, in his time.

But

Object.

But you will say, we see the contrary, proud men are advanced, and humble men deprest, they have riches when as the humble man is poore, and as we use to say, where the hedg is lowest, there all the beasts go over, and tread it downe: every man will be ready to trample upon the humble man.

Ans. 1.

I answer first; The Lord gives outward gaudy things to proud men; but hee gives his Jewels, to those that are humble, hee reveales his secret to them; these are Princes though they goe on foot, and the other are servants, though they ride on horsebacke.

2

But this is not all my answer: but secondly I say; that even for the things of this life, the Lord doth exalt the humble and bring downe the proud; onely with this caution, hee doth both in season, when things are brought to maturity; as the Apostle Saint Peter saith, *1 Pet. 5. 6. humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, that hee may exalt you in due time.* God doth it not on a suddaine. When the proud like the come are ripe, then he puts in the sickle, and cuts them downe, and casts them into the fire. The wall which is sweld, must have a time to moulder and fall, and so on the contrary, there is a due time, for the exaltation of the humble. And therefore if thou sayest, I have humbled my selfe, and have not beene healed, I have not beene freed from such a temptation for all my humiliation; if this be thy case, then assure thy selfe thou art not humbled enough, but goe thou and yet bring thy heart lower, and then be confident, that this rule will hold: the Lord will take off the smarting plaster

Itter as soone as it hath eaten out the proud flesh; so soone as thy heart is truly humbled, the Lord will helpe thee: he will either remove the crosse, or give thee that which is æquivalent: and thus the Lord hath alwaies done. So he dealt with *Ioseph*. You happily may thinke, and he might thinke, it was long before hee was exalted; but yet that time was not too long, for as soone as the Lord had truly humbled him, then hee presently exalted him; as you may see in *Psalm. 105. 18, 19, 20. Whose feete they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron, untill the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tried him: then the King sent, and loosed him, &c.* And so he dealt with *Iob*. All that time that his friends were reasoning with him, his heart would not be brought downe; but the Lord himselfe must come and reason with him; and then he began to abhor himselfe, in dust and ashes: and how soone after was hee restored, and all he lost restored double also? This being (as you see) Gods constant course, if thou humbling thy selfe, yet liest long under a calamity, thou mayest assure thy selfe, there is something wanting in thy heart, and therefore bee content with Gods dealing. *2 Cor. 12. lest Saint Paul should be exalted, there was given him a thorne in the flesh: if Saint Paul needed humility, who doth not? Remember this rule, that if Gods people humble themselves, then he will certainly helpe them; onely it will bee in due season.*

But you will say: how shall we get downe our stubborne hearts? Pride is very naturall, and the hardest thing in the world to overcome.

Quest.

Let

Ans.

Let every man consider, whether he be released or no from the plague of his heart ; if that there be not some calamity, which hangs continually on him : if there be, then know, thou art not humbled enough (the meaning is not, that thou shouldest be brought to an apprehension and feare of hell ; but thy heart is to be brought down more: thou mayest be humbled truly so as to be within the covenant, and yet not enough to have thy heart wrought to this or that frame God would bring it unto.) And to bring your hearts lower, use these meanes.

First consider your hearts often, consider what unruly lusts you find hid there ; make it your daily custome, to search into this. We goe not a days journey in this life, but there is somewhat discovered in our hearts which may serve to humble us further, as it was with them in the wilderness, *Deut. 8. 2. Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty yeares in the wilderness, to humble thee, to prove thee, and to know what was in thy heart, &c.* There is not one day, but a godly wise man may dilcerne something in his heart, which may be matter of humiliation to him, which he saw not before ; vaine glorious speeches, unlawfull silence, cowardize in good causes, thy worldly mindednesse, thy unruly affections, that will be still stirring, and something will be discovered without in thy actions also, which when thou seest such sparkes ascending, remember to looke to the fire, the furnace within ; these are but the buds, there is a deepe roote of bitternesse within ; these are but ebullitions ; consider there is a spring within,

within, search into all the corners of the house for this sower leaven. So the first meanes is studying our selves, for the way to humble a mans selfe is to know himselfe.

And secondly, as you must study your selves, so you must study the Scriptures, that is, you must consider the strictnesse, the holinesse, &c. that is required of you therein, and lay that and your hearts together, apply this leuell and square to your wayes, and it will discover the crookednesse of them, and dresse your selves by this looking glasse, every morning; for it will shew you the smallest spots; and this will exceedingly humble us: For this is a sure rule, degrees of humiliation follow degrees of illumination; as any Christian is enlightned more, so hee is humbled more: hence hee that is most conversant in Scripture, is most humbled.

And thirdly, you must not only look to increase your light, but looke to your hearts and wayes, to keepe your selves upright, and to bee constant in an holy course, and all holy duties; and this will bee meanes to increase your humiliation. Many abstaine from holy courses and duties, because say they, wee are not humbled enough: It is true indeed wee must begin with humility, yet this you must know, that the setting your selves to a holy course, is of it selfe a notable meanes to increase humiliation; for thy watchfullnesse will increase tendernesse, and tendernesse will increase thy humiliation. Men that are bold in sinning, their hearts grow hard; and so on the contrary, when men are fearefull to offend, their hearts grow tender.

4

But yet adde to this, diligence in your callings, for (as the wise man saith) *The sluggard is more wise in his owne conceit, than ten men that can give a reason,* that is, he is selfe conceited and proud. A sluggard that hath nothing to do, looks abroad to other mens matters, and lookes not to his owne wayes, nor his owne heart, which would bee a meanes to humble him: therefore diligence is a great meanes to humble, to bring downe our hearts, because idlenesse is a meanes to lift them up.

5

And further, it is profitable for you to remember times and sinnes that are past. A man will bee ready to say, I hope I am changed now, what I have beene I care not for; but the Lord to humble *David* told him what he had beene, *I tooke thee from the sheepe-fold, &c.* so with the Iewes, *Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite, and I saw thee in thy blood.*

6

Bee carefull to distinguish wisely betweene grace in thee, and thy selfe of thy selfe; and that will bee a meanes to humble thee. As *Paul* in 2 *Cor.* 12. 11. *Not I, but the grace of God in mee.* Put the case the Lord hath beautified us with with many graces and gifts above others; thou must not exalt thy selfe above others; wee must looke upon our selves as of our selves, to bee the same men still. Can the wall say, it hath brought forth the beames that the sunne hath cast upon it? the wall is the same: so if God hath shined upon thee, and left others in darknesse, art thou the better of thy selfe? shall the pen boast it selfe, because it hath written a faire Epistle? who made it? who put inke into it, guided it? the glory

ry belongs not to the pen, but to the writer. What though God hath used thee in some great worke, and not others? the praise is his, not thine: Wee praise not the trumpeter, but him that soundes it. *Non laudamus tubam, sed tubicinem.* Paul was a better Trumpet than ten thousand others, and yet hee saith, *I am nothing.* The smoake a dusky and obscure vapour climes up into the light, as if it were better than pure aire. Many exalt themselves above their brethren, for gifts and outward things, which are but the trappings, and make not the difference betweene man and man; as if a man were the taller, because hee stands on a hill, or a man had a better body, because hee had a better suit on: thou art the same man still. Wee are not to bee proud, no not of any Graces, much lesse of outward things.

Lastly, is the Lord thus mercifull to the humble? then take heed of applying those promises to thy selfe without a cause, when thou art not humbled.

Vse 5.

But thou wilt say, I am humbled.

*Object.
Answ.*

It is well if it be so: But consider, hath thy humiliation brought thee home? perhaps it hath brought thee out of Egypt, but hath it brought thee into Canaan? hath it driven thee to the City of refuge? to the homes of the Altar? to thy fathers house? The Prodigall changed many places, ere hee came home in earnest. Many came out of Egypt, that never came into Canaan, but died in the Wildernesse. The Meteors have matter enough, in the vapors themselves to carry them above the

earth, but not enough to unite them to the element of fire: therefore they fall and returne to their first principles. Art thou watchfull over all thy wayes, fearefull to offend, looking to every step where thou settest thy foote, how thou hearest, how thou prayest, how every worke is done, every word spoken, every houre spent? For this is certaine, if he be humbled, it will dry up the fountaine of sinne, it will heale his bloody flux, and make him wary in all his wayes, and fearefull to sinne. Thus much for this *first condition*.

*If my people that are called by my name, doe
humble themselves, and seeke my face.*

We are now come to the next condition; *If
my poople seeke my face*: where wee may observe this point,

*Doct. That except a man seeke Gods face, all his labour is
lost in his humiliation and prayers, and whatsoever else
hee doth.*

This is put in among those other conditions; and therefore without this the promise is not made to us.

For the unfolding of this point, wee must first enquire,

Quest. What it is to seeke Gods face.

*Answ. It is to seeke the Lord himselfe: for his face in
Scripture is often taken for his person; so the word
is*

is used *Exodus 20.2.* in the first Commandement, *Thou shalt have no other gods before my face*, that is, before mee. So then the meaning is, we must *seeke* the L O R D himselfe. Many, when they are in distresse, will *seeke* to the Lord for deliverance, in time of Famine, they will *seeke* to him for Corne and Wine and Oyle; as they in the Prophet; but they *seeke* not the Lord himselfe, nor communion and reconciliation with him; they *seeke to the Lord*, but not *the Lord*: they *seeke* what hee can doe for them, but not his *person*, not himselfe: So those *Hos.7.14.* *Ye have not cryed to me, sayes God, when yee howled upon your beds. Yee assemble your selves for corne and wine, and rebell against mee.*

They then wanted Corne and Wine, &c. and sought them at G O D s hands; but not mee *the Lord* whom you had lost. Thou mayest *seeke* salvation and deliverance from hell, out of the strength of naturall wisdom, because it is for thy good: and also being convinced of the necessity of faith and repentance, to escape hell, and obtaine salvation. Men may thereupon goe farre in the performance of many duties, and bee constant a while in them, and yet not *seeke the Lords face* in all these: and then the Lord regards them not. Take a thiefe that is arraigned at the barre, he will cry earnestly for his life, but yet he *seeketh not the face of the Iudge*, i.e. he doth it without love to the Iudge, but onely out of the love of life: So we may doe much to escape hell, and to attaine the life opposite to it, and yet all this while not *seeke the presence of God*, and then G O D regards it not. You find this disposition in your selves, and

Psalme. 34.

see it in others : If a man bee never so observant of any of you, and performe never so many offices of friendship to you, yet if a man can say, hee loves me not for all this, hee doth not prize mee, nor desire my love and favour so much for it selfe, but for his owne ends ; in this case you care not for what hee doth : So the Lord, hee knowes the heart and the reines, and what thine end is, whether it bee communion with his person immediately, or thine owne welfare meerely ; and if so, regards not thy humbling thy selfe nor thy prayers. The promise you see is suspended upon it : it is a distinguishing point, and will separate betweene the precious and the vile, it is a marke set upon Gods people alone : *To seeke Gods face.*

Wee will therefore further and more particularly consider, what it is to *seeke Gods face or presence.* And there are three wayes to finde it out.

I

First by what is here joyned with it, *If they humble themselves, and seeke my face :* and so by considering the connexion that these two have together, finde out what seeking of G O D s face is. Now there is a twofold humiliation wrought in men :

The one is, for that bitternesse and punishment that sinne brings with it, and this never brings forth either faithfull prayers, or *Seeking Gods face.*

But there is another kinde of humiliation, which hath a further ingredient in it, and that is the sight of the foulness of sinne, when God openeth a crevice of light to looke upon sin, not only as that which brings bitternesse with it, but as that, which in it selfe is not filthy and abominable, and by that

that light it is made such in his account : for it is one thing to flee from the sting of the Serpent, an other thing to hate the Serpent it selfe ; and so to take heed of the Wolfe, because of his cruelty, and to hate the Wolfe it selfe, are differing things. Other creatures may hate the properties and conditions of a Wolfe ; but a Lambe only hates the Wolfe it selfe. Now with this latter kinde of humiliation there goes and is conjunct with it an enlightning, whereby God shews to a man his *owne glorious face*, the lustre whereof helps him further to see the foulness of sinne. God by the same light of the Spirit, whereby hee shewes a man the ugliness of sinne, discovers withal his own excellencies, which makes the sinner thus humbled to *seeke his face*, to seeke grace, as well as mercy. But other men either *see not Gods face* at all, or onely see his angry countenance ; onely those whom the Lord calleth effectually, see *his gracious face*. Now hee to whom it is hid and sees it not, seekes not Gods face ; for none can seeke it, unlesse they have seene it, and hee who sees it onely as angry, flies from God ; but hee discovers himselfe to the truly humble, the secrets of the Lord are with such, *Psalm. 25. and so Iohn 15. 15. I call you not servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth, but I have call'd you friends, for all things I have heard of my Father, I have made knowne to you.* Hee reveales himselfe to those who are already his friends, or to those hee is about to make his friends ; one of the first things hee doth, is to reveale his face to them : With men indeed, men are first made friends, and then secrets are revealed ; but contrarily

with God, hee reveales his secrets to us and his face, that wee may be made friends with him, and then wee grow into further acquaintance with him, and they are therefore cal'd *the secrets of the Lord*, because only revealed to the Saints. Servants indeed see what is done in the house, but there are many things which their masters reveale not to them: and so may come hereto the House of God, and heare what is spoken of GOD and CHRIST, but yet there are some certaine secrets that are hid from them, that are told onely to the children, the sonnes and daughters of God: The other heare as much and see as much, for the outside, as *Gods children* doe, yet the secrets of things are hid from them, and among others, *Gods face*; and the excellencies thereof are hid from them. This hee reveales (as his other secrets) onely to those that feare him; and this revealing it is a speciall worke of the Spirit. If a man would see the Sunne, all the Starres in heaven and torches in the earth could not helpe him to see it or shew it to him, unlesse the Sunne it selfe shines and ariseth, and there come a light from the Sunne it selfe, you cannot come to see it; and so all the Angells of heaven and wits of men on earth, cannot shew you Gods face, unlesse hee opens the clouds and reveales himselfe by his owne Spirit, it will not bee done; which is therefore called *the Spirit of Revelation*, Ephes. I. 17. by which God reveales his secrets to his children, when hee begins to call them effectually, they see him and none else; wee make knowne the Doctrines about GOD and CHRIST, &c. to all alike, but the Lord makes the difference, by

by revealing himselfe to one; and not unto another; that which is said especially of the Jewes 2 Cor. 3. 15, 16. verses, and so on, is in like manner applicable to us all. The Lords face shines, as *Moses face* did, verse 15. and hee gives the knowledge of his glory in the face of *Iesus Christ* in the ministry of the word every day; but there is a vaile lies upon all mens hearts, upon all but those whom the Lord calls, and upon theirs also, till hee calleth them, as upon the Jewes hearts, verse 16. *Nevertheless when they shall turne unto the Lord, the vaile shall bee taken away*: and untill then, Gods face cannot bee seene, as *Moses face* was not; and who shall take away that vaile? *The Spirit of the Lord*; where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty, vers. 17. and when he doth free us of that vaile, then *We behold the Glory of the Lord as in a glasse with open face*, v. 18. that is, we see the amiableness of his face, the happinesse of communion with him; and when the light breakes through the cloudes thus, and the Lord gives a glimpse of himselfe, then they see him, and never give over seeking his face, more and more, till they have found him: And because that other sort I spake of, if they see him, they yet see but an angry face onely, and that makes men flie from the Lord; as wee see in distresse, and at death many will do any thing rather then goe to God; they tremble at his presence, and no way desire it, as *Adam* did not, but fled from it: and thus would all doe, if no word were revealed. Therefore the Spirit of revelation, takes away the vaile, and breakes the cloudes, that his owne Elect may have a glimpse of his face, and the Spirit of adoption, who is
sent

2 Cor. 4.
6.

lent downe into their hearts, shewes God as mercifull, full of kindnesse and of love: they see not onely his face, but his face shining in all gracious willingnesse to receive them: hee presenteth him as a loving father ready to admit of them, and graciously to forgive and receive them: They see *Gods face*, that is, both his excellency, and beautie, and also his love and graciousnesse towards them; and this makes them seeke his presence and reconciliation with him, and never to bee at rest without it, as *Moses*, Lord, wee will not stirre a foot without thy presence, *Exodus* 34. 18. A right suitor cares for nothing, but the love and presence of the person sued to: so they desire nothing, can bee content with nothing, but the presence of God, communion with God, *The light of his countenance.*

The second thing whereby I expresse what it is to *seeke Gods face*, is to *seeke the Lord* alone, as sequestred from punishments and rewards, in his owne person, as considered in himselfe, in his Attributes, in his holinesse and purity; so as not to seeke the things hee brings with him, but to seeke himselfe, and the things which are in him.

Object.

But you will say, this is very hard, to set aside all respects to rewards and punishments.

Answ.

It is an error to thinke, that you may not make use of rewards and punishments: for,

First punishments and the threatnings of the Lord are the true object of feare; and a faculty and an habit may lawfully bee exercised about their proper object; and so rewards are the subject of desire, and so may lawfully be sought after and desired.

The

The Lord himselfe in Scripture, useth these motives, of Iudgements on the one side, and of rewards on the other, and therefore wee may make use of them to our owne hearts; for to that end hath God propounded them.

Therefore I will set downe two conclusions to cleare this to you, what use there may bee made of rewards and threarnings.

I Conclusion, the propounding of, and the respect unto rewards and punishments; is a good beginning to draw us on, *to seeke the Lords face*: they are a good introduction. A man that hath not as yet *seene Gods face*, the feare of hell may cause him to reflect on his owne heart and wayes, and to bee sensible of the evill of them: and so the happinesse of heaven may draw him on: but all this while he is but in beginning. A Spouse that is considering with her selfe, whether shee should marry such an husband or no, beginneth to consider at first, what shee shall bee without him, and what shee shall have with him; shee considers him perhaps as one that will pay all her debts, and make her honourable &c. and yet it may be, yet she considers not the man all this while, and yet these considerations are good preparatives to draw her on, to give entertainment to him, but after converse and acquaintance with the person, she likes the person himselfe so well, that she is content to have him, though she should have nothing with him; and so shee gives her full and free consent to him, and the match comes to be made up betweene them, out of true and sincere free love and liking: So it is here, men begin at first to consider
their

their owne misery most, and that if they should apply themselves to other things as remedies, they should bee still to seeke, for there is a vanity in all things; and if to themselves, that they cannot helpe themselves in trouble: therefore they judge they must goe to the mighty G O D, who is able to doe more than all, to rid them out of misery: and they consider, that going to him they shall have heaven besides: and yet all this while they consider not the L O R D S person: yet this consideration makes way, that G O D and wee may meet and speake together; it brings our hearts to give way, that the L O R D may come to us (that I may so speake, for before we are not to be spoken with) it causeth us to attend to him, to looke upon him, to converse with him, to admit him as a suitor, and to bee acquainted with him, and whilst wee are thus conversing with him, G O D reveales himselfe; and then being come to the knowledge of him in himselfe by that his speciall light spoken of afore, wee love him for himselfe; then wee are willing to seeke his presence, to seeke him for our husband, though all other things were removed from him. And now the match is made, and not till now; and then wee so looke upon him, that if all those other advantages were taken away, wee should yet still love him, and not leave him for all the world, and so as if wee should imagine hee would give us never so much, and yet with draw his face, wee could not bee at rest. Before, if a man could but be assured, he should not goe to hell, and should have creatures and comforts about him; it would bee enough to him; but now it is not so.

Now

Now if **G O D S** countenance bee but clouded, if any breach bee betwixt a man and God, hee cannot rest till it bee made up, and hee see his face againe.

Yet still after the match is made, there is a second use of punishments and rewards; they are usefull, not onely to bring us in, but to confirme us also in our choise; they serve both as an Introduction, and as an helpe, when wee are come in, to confirme us in our choice: As when a woman is married, shee having this husband, I live in an house, well furnished, and I have many conveniences. I enjoy not onely my husbands person, but with many additions. So it is with us, though the **L O R D** alone bee sufficient reward; so as if wee had nothing else, wee would never goe backe of our choice, yet wee having many good things with him, it helpeth us in our love to him, and confirmes us in our choise: These are then good additions, but not good principles and foundations; and encourage us much if added, and put to *seeke the L O R D* for himselfe, as the principall. So then as ciphers added to figures, they helpe to make the number greater, though if they stand alone, they are nothing; so these; and though they be not good leaders, yet they are good followers: They are as a good wind, that fills the sailes, and sets the Ship forward with the greater speed, when the rudder is once set right, to steere to God alone.

2 Conc

The third thing whereby I explaine what is meant by seeking Gods face, is to *seeke the L O R D S* presence in opposition to a mans selfe, when a man doth it with deniall of himselfe, not serving his owne

3

owne ends *in seeking the Lord*, but gives up himselfe to the Lord alone. In all things an unregenerate man doth not know the Lord, is not acquainted with him, and therefore will not preferre the Lord to himselfe: but a regenerate man that knowes him reckoneth all things, as life, liberty, riches &c. but as drosse and dung, so hee may enjoy the Lord: hee hath set up the Lord for his God, in his heart, and desires not to stand upon his owne bottome; and therefore when the Lord comes into competition with himselfe, and the matter is betwixt God and his credit, &c. hee is willing to deny himselfe.

Object.

But here the great objection is, how it is possible for a man, not to seeke his owne happinesse, safety and advantage?

This troubles many, and makes them think their sincerity but hypocrisie, and may put a scruple into the best: I will therefore cleare this for their sakes whose hearts are upright, as also to exclude those whose hearts are not sound.

Answ.

The answer stands upon these two points.

First, it is true that a man may seeke and love himselfe, and desire his owne happinesse, yea and all his actions may take their rise from thence; so as to bee moved *in seeking the Lord*, in doing what he doth with a respect to his own good and safety, and that this is so, take these reasons.

I

Because God hath commanded it, for hee bids us *love our neighbour as our selves*: where it is taken for granted, that wee must love our selves, because loving our selves is made the *prima mensura*, the rule of loving our neighbour. Now to love a
mans

mans selfe, what is it but to seeke a mans owne good?

A man is commanded not to kill himselfe, or to hurt himselfe, and by the rule of contraries hee is thereby commanded to seeke the preservation of himselfe, and his owne good: Foras when we expound the commandement *Thou shalt not kill*, as suppose *thy neighbour*, wee say it includes this affirmative command, thou shalt seeke the good of thy neighbour; so when wee expound it of our selves, wee are to understand it as not onely forbidding us to destroy our selves, but as commanding to preserve our selves, and to seeke our owne safety.

It is impossible for the creature, not to will its owne happinesse; the Lord doth not command that which is simply impossible even to pure nature: but it is the nature of every thing that hath an appetite, *appetere bonum sibi*, to desire that which is good for it selfe.

Selfe-love is a plant of Gods owne planting; and therefore not to bee rooted up: God did put it into us all, for it is the nature of every thing to do so, and *opus natura est opus authoris natura*.

Many motives which the Scripture useth are taken from selfe-love, as that of CHRIST, *fear him that can cast both body and soule into hell*: And so when it promiseth us a Kingdome. The Scripture deales with men by working upon this principle; and by arguments taken from our selves. This is the eare which the holy Ghost takes hold of, and leades a man into the wayes of peace by, and wee must not pluck off this eare.

The

The second part of the answer is, that yet notwithstanding, wee may and ought *to seeke the Lord* in opposition to our selves, that is, when God and our selves come into competition, the commandment comes in opposition with our selves; the case being such as if wee obey God, wee hurt our selves; then wee must preferre God and his commandements to our selves.

Quest.

But you will aske, how can this stand with the former; that a man should make his owne good the rise of his actions, and yet in his actions oppose himselfe?

Answ.

When once a man is perswaded, that even to destroy himselfe is the best way to provide for himselfe, and that to let himselfe goe, and his credit and life, and give up all to God, is that whereby he shall put himselfe into a better condition; when a man is perswaded of this, then you see both doe stand together. And wee never doe exhort a man *to seeke God* in opposition to himselfe, but when it is best for him so to doe, not to give himselfe up to any thing that shall bee an immediate hurt to him; but when otherwise it would bee worse for him, and when letting himselfe goe is the next way to happinesse; and then a man may bee exhorted to it, when hee shall bee perswaded that his good is contained in God more than in himselfe; as wee say the being of an accident is more in the subject than it selfe; so as take away the subject, and the very separation is a destruction to it: So it is with the creature which hath no bottome of it selfe, so as the separation of it from God is the destruction of it, as on the contrary the

the keeping of it close unto God, though in a case that seemes to bee the ruine of it, is its happinesse and perfection. As for example, when *Abraham* should have destroyed his sonne by offering him up, hee thought hee should not lose by it, nor *Isaac* neither: he thought with himselfe, God hath commanded me to do it, and I never yet lost by keeping any commandement hee gave mee; God is able to raise him up againe. I never yet was a loser by him, and on the contrary I shall bee sure to bee a loser, and my sonne also if I doe it not. It is indeed impossible, that if a man should simply bee a loser, that hee should doe thus; but when hee considers that though hee bee destroyed at present, yet hee believes it will bee for his good; and so it will bee indeed: As take a beame of the Sunne, the way to preserve it, is not to keepe it by it selfe, the being of it depends upon the Sunne; take the Sunne away, and it perisheth for ever: but yet though it should come to be obscured, and so cut off for a while, yet because the Sunne remaines still, therefore when the Sunne shines forth againe, it will be renewed againe. Such a thing is the creature being compared with **G O D**. If you would preserve the creature in it selfe, it is impossible for it to stand; like a glasse without a bottome, it must fall and breake. When therefore this is considered by a man, then hee will say, I will bee content to deny my selfe, and seeke the **L O R D**, when my selfe comes into competition with any commandement of his. And let not this seeme strange to you, that the best way to make a mans selfe happy, is to resigne up himselfe to the
L ut most

utmost to glorifie God. You see in common experience that take a corne that is fallen into the ground: *if it continue whole, it perisheth; but if it die, it brings forth an hundred fold.* 1 Cor. 15. 36. *That which thou sowest, sayes the Apostle, is not quickned, except it dye.* The Apostle there speakes it of the resurrection: but we may truly apply it to the resurrection of a sinner here; that except a man die, that is, bee willing to let all hee hath goe, and to expose himselfe to what the Lord shall put upon him, that hee perisheth indeed; but if hee die, then hee is quickned, hee shall bee againe by it; even in this life he shall have an hundred fold. And when this is considered of thoroughly by a man, hee will easily seeke Gods face with neglect of himselfe. And that thus when ever a man suffers any thing for a good conscience in obedience to God, it is the best way to provide for himselfe; that this I say, is not a mere notion, may appeare by comparing those places together; the first where it is said, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy selfe, and thou shalt love God above all, even above thy selfe;* and with it also that other, *Dent. 10. 13, 14. Thou shalt keepe the commandments of the Lord, which I command thee, for thy good.* Now put both together: this is Gods commandment, to love God above thy selfe; and all the commandements are given for thy wealth, for thy good; therefore this amongst the rest. And therefore denying our selves, when God and our selves come into competition, is the best way to provide for our selves: therefore set it downe for a conclusion, that to have God alone, and to seeke his face thus

thus, is your happinesse. The end of every thing is the perfection of it; now God is the end of the creature, and therefore to get him, is to get thy perfection and happinesse. Againe, wee have all from him, as the branch hath all from the roote; and therefore as the way for the branch to keepe life in it selfe, is to keepe close to the roote; and when it is broken off it dies, so wee so long as wee cleave to and seeke the Lord, wee are preserved. And this was the ground which all the Saints went upon in their sufferings, both of persecution and death; and this was the case of *Moses* and *Paul*, when the one wished himselfe rased out of the booke of life, and *Paul* to bee accursed from *CHRIST*; that is, saith Saint *Paul*, if this bee for Gods glory, and the good of his Church; let mee perish. In which though they seemed to imply their immediate destruction, yet they knew what was ultimately best for themselves.

And this is all the difference betweene a carnall man, and one to whom God hath revealed himselfe; they both agree in this, they both love themselves, and seeke their owne happinesse; but they differ in this, that they seeke it in a different way; the one in the Lord, but a carnall man seekes it in himselfe and the creatures: A godly man is so perswaded of God, that hee seekes him, and cares not what hee loseth to gaine him; but another man, when hee is told of an invisable God, hee will not trust to things unseene; the things hee sees hee will rest upon, and so seekes for an happinesse within his owne compasse; and therefore when himselfe

comes in competition with the Lord, he lets the Lord goe.

Quest.

But then another question comes to be answered, how these two should likewise stand together; to seeke the preservation of a mans selfe, and yet to expose himselfe to destruction, as *Moses* and Saint *Paul* did.

Answ.

For answer, you must know, that in every regenerate man there are *two selves*.

That common nature, that is in every man (in which the principle is rooted, to love a mans selfe) hath *two biases*; the one *Spirit* which leades to *God*, the other *flesh*: and these two in this common nature makes two severall *selves*. By the first a man is carried to seeke the Lord, by the other to seeke himselfe immediately and in the first place; and these two are reckoned two *severall selves* in Scripture, and so expressed to us: first, flesh and corruption is called a man selfe, *2 Cor. 4. 5. we prea. b not our selves, but Christ*, that is, for our owne glory, which he calls *himselfe*, because men use to reckon it as *themselves*. So *2 Cor. 12. 2, 5. I knew a man in Christ, &c. caught up into the third heavens*; of such an one I will glory, but of my selfe I will not glory; by *selfe*, he meanes either the corruption which was in him, but there was something else in him, which he reckons as another man from this selfe, *a man in Christ*, of such a man I will rejoyce, that is, of my regenerate part, which is a New Creature in *Christ*, but not of my selfe, that is, my flesh and corruptions I will not rejoyce, or of the regenerate selfe neither, as of it selfe, but as it is in *Christ*, which

which is another expression, and this corruption is called a mans selfe, because it is spread over the whole man, as the forme through the whole matter, and a man will not part with it, but fights against every thing, fights against it as if it were himselfe.

And secondly, that the other regenerate part is called a mans selfe, which a godly man reckons for rather then the other, we have an expresse place for it, *Rom. 7. It is not I, but sinne that dwells in mee,* that is, not the regenerate part which I account my selfe, but sinne which I account but an inmate; dwelling within my rooffe; which yet is called a mans selfe, for the like reason aforesaid, because spread over the whole man; and now it is easie to conceive, how the preservation of himselfe may stand, with exposing himselfe to destruction, and how a man may seeke the Lord in opposition to himselfe.

In that which the flesh desires, a man is bound not to seeke himselfe, that is, not that selfe, but yet he may seeke the good of his other selfe, and seeke the Lord too, for Gods will and it are unisons, and he may be said to *seeke Gods face* alone, though he seekes the desire of *that selfe*: for there is no difference, no opposition betweene them; and likewise that regenerate selfe may seeke him in opposition to that other selfe, that is, what it desires, when it desires amisse (for all those desires which are amisse are from that fleshly selfe) and so we must not desire what our selves would desire, but destroy it, and the desires of it, and seeke the Lord in opposi-

tion to it, which tends to the preservation of our regenerate selfe, and proves so in the end.

So then to seeke Gods face contains these three things in it.

1 First, to have his face revealed to you, and to see him as a father.

2 To seeke him as sequestred from punishments and rewards.

3 To seeke him alone in opposition to your selves.

And that all this ought to be done, we will give you one reason, and so come to the uses.

Reas.

And that reason is drawne from the holinesse of the Lord, *Esay 6. 3. One Angell cryed to another, holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the whole earth is full of his Glory*: this *ἁγιωσύνη* was the proclamation of *Angels*, and that upon this occasion. The Lord sends *Esay* the Prophet to pronounce a Iudgement to his people, and that a great one, the rejection of the Iewes, and at the same time the *Angels* are sent to proclame Gods holinesse: now holinesse is the appropriation of a thing to the Lords use, and a sequestration of it from common use: and so the holinesse of God himselfe (which is the rule of all other holinesse) is an appropriation of his actions to himselfe, as his end: he is then said to be holy, when he doth things for himselfe, therefore being about to do so great a worke peculiarly for himselfe and his glory, as when he would destroy his owne people, and destroy Kingdomes for his owne best advantage and ends, the glory of himselfe, then he lets them know this as the only reason,

son, because he is holy; for if he should not respect himselfe, hee should not be holy. So *Rom. II. 33.* to the end. The Apostle having spoken of this rejection here prophesied, concludes with this; *His Indgements are unsearchable, and his waies past finding out, &c. of him, and to him, and through him are all things, and to him bee glory for ever.* As if he should have said, God hath done all this, but I know not the reason of it, nor any one else; onely God is for himselfe, for he being of no cause but himselfe, therefore he may do all for himselfe: if he were of another, he might doe all for another, yea else he were not holy. Now if this be Gods holinesse, then the holinesse of man, is to do all for God; which he is therefore to doe, because he is of another cause above himselfe, and therefore is to seeke another end above himselfe, namely, the Lord; and then he is said to be holy, when he hath no eye to himselfe, but to God, when in his recreations, the use of riches, &c. and in his whole course he hath this eye and ayme at God, and not himselfe.

The nature of holinesse is expressed in two things: First, in purenesse: Secondly, sequestration to God, so that holinesse, purity, and chastity are much alike as it were, as there is also much affinity between the Greek words *ἅγιος* and *ἀγνός*: Chastity in a Wife stands in keeping close to her husband; and being sequestred from all other; and Gods holinesse consists, first in the purenesse of his nature, and secondly in a sequestration of all things to himselfe: Now our holinesse is not so, but wee being

of another cause, wee must doe all for another end; our holinesse stands therefore in giving up our selves to the Lord: therefore sayes *Esay*, *Sanctifie the Lord, and make him your dread*; as if he had said, if you make any thing else your dread, you doe not sanctifie the Lord. What he sayes of feare, is true of all other affections, and actions: holinesse dedicates all unto the Lord: and some actions are holy for the substance of them, as Prayer, keeping the Lords day, &c. and all such immediate duties of his worship, some by putting a right end upon them; and so all actions may be holy of what kind so ever, as recreations, which are common actions, and eating and drinking, all which when done to the Lord, doe become holy. It is the nature of morall actions to take their specification from their circumstances, especially their end, more then from the substance it selfe: and so all such common actions may bee holy to the LORD, and so that place of Saint *Peter* is to be understood, *be holy in all manner of conversation*, 1 *Pet.* 1. in all the turnings of your lives, even in common actions, this being the nature of holinesse in the generall, both as in God and in our actions.

There is a double holinesse required in every man.

1 A giving up a mans selfe to the Lord, as 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. *They first* (it is said) *gave themselves up to the Lord.* To give a mans selfe up as a Sacrifice to the Lord, that is, the holinesse of a man; and when any thing is sacrificed, it is given up to the use of that Lord, to whom it is sacrificed.

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The second is a giving up all things with him-
 selfe, his understanding, will, thoughts, affections,
 life, liberty, credit, goods, all his power, might,
 whereby he is able to doe any thing, to resigne all
 these to the Lord, and by this he sanctifies the
 Lord; and this is the holinesse of a man to doe all
 for the Lord onely. So that the reason is cleare;
 let a man doe what he will, keepe the Sabbath,
 pray, &c. If there be not this holinesse in his heart,
 all his labour is lost, as you all grant; for *without
 holinesse no man shall see God.* Now it is not holy,
 except it be given up to the Lord alone, excluding
 himselfe and the creature.

Is all our labour lost, except we seeke Gods face,
 though otherwise a man goe never so farre? then
 there is great reason, to examine our selves, whe-
 ther we *seeket the Lord* for himselfe or no; for other-
 wise, all your labour is lost, for then you doe not
 set up God for your God in your hearts, but some-
 thing else, namely, that which you seeke besides
 him; as in marriage we say, when a man marries a
 woman, not out of love to her person, but for
 riches; that he marries not the woman, but her
 wealth, so it is here.

And then secondly, you will never hold out
 in seeking the Lord; and if you doe not hold out,
 then all your labour will be lost, *Ezek. 18.* though
 a man hath beene righteous all his dayes; yet if he
 fall from God, all his righteousness shall be for-
 gotten: and such a man as seekes not the Lord for
 himselfe, will fall away, as appeares by that, *Hos.*
7. 16. They returne, but not to the most High: they
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are like a deceitfull bowe ; that is, when a man turnes to the Lord, but not for himselfe, he will returne againe, and start aside like a broken bowe; for if he attaine those ends for which he sought the Lord, his *seeking* is at an end. See this in *Amaziah*, 2 *Chron.* 25. he went farre in obedience, but yet he did not *seeke the Lord* in it ; he was content to lose an hundred talents, and to send backe the *Israelites* he had hired therewith (which was such a triall as even a good man might have failed in it) yet he did not *seeke the Lord* in this, he was perswaded, that if he had taken the *Israelites* along with him, he should have lost the battell, which was his chiefe end in that action ; he beleevd the Prophet so farre, and so sought his safety alone, and because he sought not the Lord, therefore he held not out ; but when he was put to other tryalls, to new temptations, and saw another worship, it pleased him, and he left the Lord ; and *started aside like a broken bowe* : as a bowe that is rotten (though otherwise faire) when an arrow is drawne to the head ; and so many brought up in good families, when they come into new company, and tryalls, they fall away, because they sought not the Lord himselfe.

3

If you doe not *seeke the Lord* for himselfe, you doe not love him, and then all your labour is lost: for all the promises are made to those that love God, *Cant.* 1. the two first verses, *Because of the favour of thy ointments ; thy name is as ointment powdered forth, therefore doe the Virgins love thee*, that is, rake those which doe much for the Lord, as much

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as another doth, though such a man doth carry the faire semblance of a Spouse, yet all this he doth comes from the affection of an harlot. *The Virgins, they love thee.* The Virgins love his person, love him for his names sake, the personall beauty that is in him, and for the sweetnesse of his love, verse 5. *Thy love is better then wine.*

This poynt well understood will come in among you as a messenger from the King of Kings, to all you of the bedchamber of the Bridegroom, making this inquiry, do you love him? are you harlots or Virgins? and will make every one to consider, to what end have I done all, have I knowne the Lord, and beene acquainted with him? have I sought Gods face in all that I have done?

But men will be ready to say, we doe seeke the Lords face. Therefore I will give you rules to distinguish, and to helpe men to discern whether they seeke the Lord or no.

Rule 1.

Consider what opinion thou hast of thy selfe. Every man that is regenerate, at his regeneration changeth his opinion of himselfe, as Saint Paul, *Rom. 7. It is no longer I, but sinne.* Before he was regenerate, sinne was himselfe; but now there was a new Lord come into the house, that renewed selfe, the regenerate part; and that which before was wholly himselfe, he now speakes of as one crept in, as of an inmate, that should not be there. Now if thou reckonest the regenerate part *thy selfe*, then thou hast sought the Lords presence: for that part is thereby strengthened. The perfection of this selfe stands in conjunction with the Lord, and so
seekes

seekes him ; if not, but thou accountest flesh in thee thy selfe, it is impossible thou shouldest *seeke God* aright, for God and it are contraries: A regenerate man says, let me have God, and what ever I lose, whether life, liberty, yet my selfe is safe ; he considers still chiefly, whether doth this tend to the safety of my selfe or no ? and though he is content, and would have the outward man do well too ; as if I have a faire house to dwell in, I would have it safe ; yet if it be set on fire, it is no great matter, so long as my selfe is kept safe. Take a man who hath cloathes on, if he can keep his cloathes whole, it is well ; but if they be rent, he cares not, so his body be safe ; so where the regenerate part is *The selfe*, if the outward man can be kept safe, it is well, he had rather have it so ; but however so the regenerate part be safe, he cares not much ; for he accounts it but as the renting of his cloathes : but take another man, that as yet is no other then he was borne at first, into whom no new man is come to dwell, he thinkes thus with himselfe, sure I must not destroy my selfe ; I would keepe a good conscience, but not so as to destroy my selfe ; and it is impossible that what a man reckons himselfe, he should suffer to be destroyed : therefore when discredit, imprisonment, &c. comes, all these are reckoned wounds given to himselfe, he lets God goe to defend and save himselfe harmelesse. All this difference comes from the difference of opinion, that a man hath of what is himselfe.

Quest.

But how shall I know what opinion I have of my selfe ?

Consider

Consider wherein thou desirest to excell, all things desire to have that excellency, which is proper to themselves ; every creature desires to build up it selfe. If therefore thou desirest to excell in things that belong to the outward man, to build up thy selfe in learning, credit and wealth, and outward conveniencies, then thy outward man and flesh is thy selfe : but if thou seekest an inward excellency, not caring for mans day, but seeking to have the praise of God, the comfort of a good conscience, and assurance of salvation ; then it is a signe thou reckonest the inward man thy selfe.

2

Consider where thou laiest up thy treasure : doest thou lay it up in the regenerate part, and endeavourest to make that richer, and every day carriest something into that chest ? then thou countest that thy selfe : *for where the treasure is, there the heart is also.* When a man shall be thus affected, that though he hath troubles abroad in the world, and decays in estate, as in health, yet so long as he find his regenerate part safe, and thriving, and standing in good tearmes with God, he applaudes himselfe. As a man when his house is broke open, he presently runs to his chest, where his chiefe treasure lyes, and if that be safe, he thinkes all is well : but if thou laiest up thy treasure in the outward man, an heape of outward things ; so as when these things are gone, thou reckonest thy selfe undone : it is certaine, thou makest that thy selfe. This was the case of *Haman, Nabal and Achitophel, &c.* and of all carnall men, whose hearts must needs sinke, when outward things leaves them, or if they be
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put into the feare of the losse of their lives and goods : but another man is like to grapes which have wine in them put into the wine-presse ; what though the skin and huske perish ? yet the wine is saved. So is it with the Saints in persecution ; their inward man is still saved, they lose but their husks : but when a man hath nothing in him but flesh and an outward man, then when these perish, all he hath is lost, and himselfe with them. It is good therefore to try your selves what opinion you have of your selves before ill times come, that you may see whether you have that in you which will not then perish, but be kept safe and sustaine you ; and thereby also you shall know whether you seeke the Lords face or no.

Rule 2.

Second rule is, consider, what it is you make your utmost end ; we are now upon a poynt that admits of very narrow differences, for as we have said, a man may performe many duties, go therein as farre as another, and yet lose all his labour, and all because he seekes not the Lords presence. And the tryall of that lyeth especially upon this, what you make your utmost end ? for though the actions be good, yet if the end be your selves, or Gods glory be made by you, but as a bridge, all is lost. Now that you may not mistake here, you must know, there is a double end ; the one of *the worke*, the other of *the workeman* : now the end of *the worke* it selfe, may be good, even in hypocrites : the action being in it selfe a holy action *ordinabile in se*, and tending to Gods service ; when yet the end of the workeman is not *the Lord*, but himselfe, this difference

rence runnes along through all actions. Two men that go together in the same way, may have a different journeyes end, *Zach. 7.* he speaking both of the Feasts and Fasts of the Iewes (two as holy duties as any other) verse 5, 6, 7. says, *but did yee them at all to me* (says God) but to returne out of Captivity? So *Hos. 10. 1.* there was much fruit found in *Israel*, yet because *they brought it forth to themselves*, not to the Lord, *therefore Israel is called an empty Vine.* A carnall man and a regenerate man differ mainely, in this; that a carnall man, when he is to doe any thing, aske what good will this bring to me? what profit, what credit shall I have by doing it? if none, he layes it aside: but a godly man (so farre as he is godly) asketh this question, whether it is commanded by God? is it for his glory and advantage? Whentherefore thou comest to preach the Gospell or studieth, consider thine end, whether for God or no? consider also what thy end is in thy trade, or any civill action, and judge by that.

But is a man bound to seeke God in every thing? may he have no respect to himselfe?

Quest.

The end must still be better then that which tends to it: and that therefore which is the chiefest good must be the chiefest end; and unlesse thou makest God better then all things else, thou doest not make him thy end, nor thy God. Again the end commands all, is most perfect, and comprehends all the rest, and that also is proper to the LORD alone, this cannot bee said of any man or creature, and therefore God alone is to be made thy end.

But

Answ.

Quest.

But may not a man make his owne happinesse his end, and doe what hee doth for his owne perfection?

Answ.

A man may and alwayes doth so, and that upon necessity, as hath beene said; onely this, there is a double end; the one is the thing it selfe which a man makes his end, the other is the benefit or fruit cometh by the attaining it. So that happinesse is that sweetnesse, that followes all ends, even as the shadow doth the body; so then the question is, what that thing is, which thou seekest this happinesse from, for that is it which is thy maine end; whether doest thou think thou canst make thy self happy by those riches and pleasures which for thy selfe thou aymest at? or doest thou looke for all thy happinesse from the Lord alone? That which a man lookes for his happinesse from, that a man makes his chiefest end; if from God, then a man makes God his utmost end, so as his owne happinesse is but the fruit that ariseth out and accompanies his seeking him.

Quest.

But may not a man provide for himselfe?

Answ.

True, but thus; whereas all that a mans minde is to bee taken up about, is either worke or wages, if it be worke, thou must doe it to God alone whose servant thou art; if it bee matter of wages (as are the things belonging to thy name, estate) these in like manner thou art to looke for from God alone. All a mans employment is taken up either in doing all for God, or receiving all from God: and if any man were a perfect servant to another man, he then ought to have an eye only to his Master in mat-

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ter of worke and to no other, and also to take what wages his master will allow him for that worke, and no other; hee ought to resolve all into his master: But no creature is a perfect servant unto another creature; but wee are so to God, and therefore wee ought both to doe all the worke wee doe for God, and also for matter of wages, to take all from him, and to depend upon his providence, so that this provision for a man is but to cast a mans self upon the Lord. It being not our work to provide for our selves, but the *Lords*, let us do all for him, and it belongs to him to give us wages, and he wil do it.

But may not a man in his actions have an eye to God, and himsef also?

Quest.

For answer to this, looke to that place *Mat. 6. 22, 23. The light of the body is the eye; if therefore the eye bee single, thy whole body shall bee full of light.* It is a *single eye*, which lookes on a single object, upon one object onely; and therefore then a man is said to have a single eye, when he lookes upon the Lord alone, when nothing else is made his God; hee lookes not on riches, nor nothing else as his God: and then *all the body is light*, that is, all the conversation is good, and hee sees whither hee goes; but *if the eye bee evill*, that is, by the rule of opposition, if it bee double; (for that is a rule of interpreting Scripture to open the meaning of phrases by what is opposed to them,) *A double eye is a wicked eye*, that is, if it bee partly set upon God, partly on a mans selfe, it is wicked. And so Saint James hath it, hee calls such an one a *double minded man, who is unstable in all his wayes.* When a man hath partly

Answer.

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an eye to the world and himselfe, partly to G o d, hee is as one distracted betweene two wayes; hee knowes not which to take, he is *unstable* like a drunken man that staggers in all hee doth, being now on one side, now for G o d: and now on another side, for himselfe: and so his *whole body is darke*, that is, his whole conversation is wicked, as being out of his way; hee sees not a right path to walke in, hee hath not a right scope whither he should tend, hee is not able to see a right object, but goes hither and thither, from onething to another, is unstable in all his wayes.

Object. But you will say, the holiest man that is hath some eye to himselfe in his actions.

Answ. It is one thing, when a man hath chosen the L o r d as his end, and that way that leades to him, though hee wavers in it, and misseth somewhat of the evennesse of his wayes, and hath falls in it; and another thing, to be distracted betweene two ways, sometimes choosing one way, sometimes another, as a carnall man doth. One that is resolved to goe in this way though with much unevennesse may fall and have many mistakes in the way, hee may have too many lookings to himselfe, but yet hee hath chosen the L o r d and followes him, and this is the difference betweene him and the other who hath two wayes, and is distracted betweene them.

Quest. But now the maine question is, how shall wee know whether we make the L o r d our utmost end or no?

Answ. There are these rules may helpe you in it.

Rule I. The utmost end gives rules to a mans whole life; all

all other ends doe it but in particular actions, and but at such and such a time, because they are but particular ends: but the utmost end doth command all in a man, all his wayes and actions; therefore then thou makest the **L O R D** thy utmost end, when in all thy actions whether publike and private, thou lookest to the **L O R D**: and in whatsoever a man doth, in all those respects and relations hee stands in, whether hee be a Magistrate or a private man, whether they be busineses or recreations, if **G O D** bee a mans end, his eye will still bee upon the **L O R D** in all: Now hee that doth not make **G O D** thus his utmost end, may finde that hee hath some secret by-ways of his owne, some secret motions differing and contrary to **G O D**, wherein hee goes, (as the planets that have a motion of their owne) though it is not open to the world, unknowne perhaps to himselfe, or not knowne at all times; but the utmost end commands all, and leaves nothing out, but the least action is subject to it.

The utmost end limits all the meanes, and sets them their bounds, but is not bounded it selfe by any: *finis prescribit media, sed ipsi fini non prescribitur.* It sayes, thus farre you shall goe, and no further; but there are no limits set to the end it selfe: As the master-builder appoints every man his worke; and they goe so farre as hee appoints them, and no further; as if health bee a mans end, it sets limits to all the meanes hee useth, to meat, and drink, and physicke: Looke what conduceth to that end, he takes so much and no more. But there are no limits set to health it selfe, hee can never have too much of

2 Rule.

202262

health. So then consider what it is gives bounds to thy course, that thou sayest when thou art come to such a pitch, thus farre will I goe, and no further: hee that maketh himselfe his end, will bee sure to have an holinesse of such limits as shall not lose him his great friends nor his estate; he will goe so farre till it come to hurt himselfe; himselfe being his end. Therefore hee limits his holinesse, hee stayes in such a pitch or gives over, but if God bee his end, he thinks hee can never have enough of God and of holinesse, and though his actions of holinesse and forwardnesse therein over-runne his credit, overthrow his estate, yet hee cares not, for it is not his end to preserve himselfe, or that which belongs to himself.

3 Rule.

Thou shalt know thy utmost end, by a secret sence which accompanieth every action thou doest: if thou narrowly lookest to it, for that is the difference betweene man and other creatures; that a man can looke backe to his owne actions, so that if thou wouldest aske thy heart, what is thy scope and purpose in this or that action? there is a secret sence accompanieth the action, in thy heart, that would discover it. Consider therefore in any busines thou doest, why thou doest it? why thou undertakest it? why thou art at so much paines and cost in it? Aske thy heart, is it for the Lord, or for thy selfe? if that will not discover it to thee, looke to the circumstances, to the manner of doing it, as why doe I preach in such a manner, and pray in such a manner? why doe I doe it thus and thus, and not in a better manner?

4 Rule.

If this will not doe it, looke to thy affections consider;

consider how thou art affected or troubled about it, when the action is done; suppose it bee a businesse that both for the matter and manner was for the Lord: but when it is done, what is it thou art grieved at? is it that thou hast got some discredit to thy selfe in the performance of it? or that God hath had no more glory by it? are thy affections troubled, that thou hast offended God in it, that something is gone from God in it, or rather that something is gone from thy selfe? thus by examining how thy affections are occupied about the thing when done, thou mayest discern thy utmost end.

Is taken out of 2 Phil. 21. *I have no man like minded, for all seeketh their owne, and not the things of Iesus Christ; that doth naturally take care for you.* Consider whether thou seekest thine owne things, or the things of IESUS CHRIST? and that whether naturally, as the word is there &c. *γυναικας*, that is, as his owne businesse, to seeke a mans owne, and to doe a thing naturally is made there in that place al one. Consider whether thou seekest the things of Christ as naturally as thine own, and whether that be done or no, thou wilt find by these three things.

5 Rule.

First a man will goe about what hee doth willingly, when a man hath a businesse of his owne to doe, he doth it willingly, and beates his head about it, and is exceeding sollicitous, but when the businesse is another mans, hee goes about it, it may bee, because hee sees it must bee done, and there is reason for it, but still he doth his owne in another manner; and thus willingly doe the Saints doe the Lords businesse: see it in Saint Paul, Rom. 15. 20. *Yea so have I*

I

202262

strived to preach the Gospell, &c. the word in the originall is φιλονεικῶμενος, I was ambitious to preach the Gospell: Looke what desires an ambitious man hath (and there are no desires so quick as those of ambition, such a man over-lookes all for his preferment) such desires had I to the preaching of the Gospell: The like affection hee expresseth in himselfe, 2 Cor. II. 28. *Besides the things without, that which commeth on mee daily, the care of all the Churches; who is offended, and I burne not?*

There are three expressions shew his willingnesse and naturall affecting of the Lords businesse: First [*ἐπιμεναι* the *Cumber*] that is, hee had (as it were) all care numbred and mustered together, and that Secondly with anxietie *μερίμνα*, with the same solicitude that a man hath about busines of his owne. Thirdly sayes he, *who is offended, and I burne not?* his affections were so hot and quick, as presently if any soule were disadvantaged, if CHRIST lost any thing, hee was presently stirred and affected with griefe.

- 2 Doest thou doe it diligently? when any thing is to bee done for the Lord Iesus, doest thou doe it with all thy might? if remissly, thou art farre from seeking the Lord: What ever a man doth for himselfe, so farre as hee conceives it to bee for himselfe, he will doe it diligently and with all his might, and wee are commanded to love the Lord with all our might, and there is a curse upon the contrary, *Cursed is hee that doth the worke of the Lord negligently*: the meaning is not, cursed is he that doth the worke of the Lord weakly, and with infirmities; for then
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all the Saints should be accursed, but that is done negligently, which is done hypocritically, and for other ends ; for they are the causes of that negligence ; to this the curse belongs, and that justly : this cold, remisse, formall, customary performance of duties, as when we receive the Sacrament or are exercised in any other duty, or in any cause that concernes the Lord, to goe about it coldly, is a signe we doe it not for the Lord.

Consider whether thou doest them faithfully ? for so a man useth to doe his owne businesse, for no man is unfaithfull to himselfe ; to another hee may performe but eye service, but not for himselfe: now so to do a thing is not to rest in the thing done, but his care will be, that it may be done effectually, so as to see the fruit and effect of it.

And if you aske how you shall discern you doe any thing faithfully ?

That is discerned by this.

When a good action is to be done, thou carest not so much that it be done, but thy selfe would be the doer of it, for thy credit, &c. as *Diotrephes*, he was a froward man, but himselfe would doe all ; but wouldest thou doe it, though the fame thereof were not knowne? doest thou desire to have it done, though another man doe it ? and thinkest, it is no matter by whose hand the worke goes forward, so that it goes forward.

Againe, secondly what doest thou, when there is a separation made, a partition betwixt the businesse of the Lord, and thine owne credit ? art thou yet then as carefull ? when two go together, it is

3

Quest.

Answ.

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202262

not knowne who is the master of the servant of one of them that followes them both, till they part, so when thy credit and Gods glory goe together, it is not knowne for which of them thou doest it ; but there are times when our owne and the Lords businesse will be separated, and then consider what thou doest, is it so, that because thou art not the first in a businesse, thou wilt doe nothing at all? or if thou shalt not be seene in it ; it is a signe thou doest it for thy selfe, and not for the Lord: when two men are to carry a beame into a house, if both strive to goe in first, they carry it in acrosse ; whereas if they would be content to come one after the other, it would goe right in; so oftengreat workes both for Church and State, might be done that are thus hindred, or are carried crosse, because men are not willing that others should go before them.

Use 2.

Consider therefore these things seriously, and bring them home to your hearts ; for to what end doe we preach? that you might know these things onely, (that makes onely for your further condemnation, and you had better never to have knowne them) but we preach them that you might lay them to heart : take therefore some time to consider these things, and if you have found your selves failing in this, be not yet discouraged, but labour to make your hearts perfect for time to come, thus to seeke the Lord alone.

To exhort to which (which is the next use I make of it) and to quicken you to this, consider what great reason there is thou shouldest seeke the Lord *Iesus*, and not thy selfe. Consider what ties
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and bonds are upon thee towards him : the bargain between him and thee is past.

I will aske you first whose servant art thou ? and should not the servant seek the profit of his master ? if a man sees a company of sheepe, and he asks whose sheepe are these ? sayes another to him, such a mans ; for he hath bought and paid for them : and hath not Christ bought thee ? and besides this his first buying of thee, who gives thee thy wages, and provides for thee, meate, drinke, and cloathing ? and is there not reason thou shouldest serve him alone ? Then, if thou beest perfectly a servant (as thou art) thou doest wrong to the Lord, if thou doest not serve him.

Againe secondly, I aske thee who is thy husband ? Is not the *Lord Iesus* ? and if thou beest his wife, oughtest thou not to seek his things ? one that is unmarried is yet her own ; but when she is married, she is her husbands. *When there was no King in Israel, every man did what was good in his owne eyes* : and if thou hadst no husband, no King, so mightest thou ; but thou art not *tui juris*, the covenant is past already, thou art not now to choose ; if thou sayest no, consider that when thou wert baptized, it was into the Name of the Lord, and that by way of a vow, which is an invocation with a curse, that is the nature of a vow : If thou sayest yea, but I was young : then, I but since thou comest to yeares of discretion, thou hast not disclaimed it, but confirmed it in the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, receiving it often, and therefore thou canst not recall it ; therefore that first covenant then made, it stands good,

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2022/6-2

as marriages made under age, if when the parties are come to yeares, they did not disclaime them they hold, and he being thy husband. Consider that as adultery is worse then fornication, the one being punished among the Jewes with death, the other but with a pecuniary mulct; so the sins which thou committest in going after other lovers is worse then if a heathen man had committed the same: he that was circumcised, Saint *Paul* sayes, was bound to keepe the whole Law; and so he that is baptized, and hath received the Lords Supper, is bound to give up himselfe to the Lord, as the Lord Christ to him, and all things in him; and so the Saints of *Macedonia* did, 2 *Cor.* 8. 5. *They gave themselves up first to the Lord.*

And if thou wert not thus bound, yet he hath deserved it at thy hands; and both these we find urged by the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 12, 13. *was Saint Paul crucified for you, or were you baptized into the name of Paul?* these were men among the *Corinthians* that did not seeke Christ alone in their professing of Christ, for *one was for Paul, and another for Apollos, another for Cephas*: but (says the Apostle) *is Christ divided?* if Christ indeed had been divided amongst these three, they might have sought them; but Christ stands alone against them all; and therefore they were to seeke Christ alone: and he brings these two arguments for it:

Because they were *baptized into the Name of Christ*, and not of *Paul* or any other: and secondly, *was Paul crucified for you?* that is, was not Christ crucified?

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And secondly, how much is there in that Word [*Crucified for you?*] we are not able to search into the height, and bredth, and depth of this your engagement unto Christ. His bodily paine was the least thing in his sufferings: that of his soule was the soule of his sufferings: *My soule is heavy unto death*, sayes he, when the pressure of his sufferings made him sweate drops of bloud in a cold night; and yet these were but the beginnings of his sorrowes, which fell on him upon the crosse, when *He cryed out, my God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Consider further the equity of it; for did not he the same for thee, which he requires of thee? for did not he empty himselfe of that eternall glory and happinesse, which he enjoyed with his Father and might have then enjoyed? did not he make himselfe poore to make thee rich? and what is it he calls thee to deny thy selfe in? to forsake a friend or two? and to some disadvantage in thy wealth? whereas he emptied himselfe of all his great glory. Is he not upon equall termes with thee, nay most unequall on his part? if he calls thee to beare the crosse for him, did not he beare a greater crosse for thee? Therefore sayes Christ, *Hee that forsakes not father and mother for mee, is not worthy of me*, and not fit to come into the number of my Disciples.

Lastly, besides all this consider; it is best for thy selfe; which is the argument moveth men above all other: for if thou doe it not, thou shalt be damned for it; and if thou wilt, thou shalt provide for thy selfe abundantly; but *if thou wilt needs save thy life, thou shalt lose it*, if thou wilt save thy credit, liberty, thou

thou maiest, but thou shalt goe to hell with thy liberty and credit. These are the eye and the hand, and it is better going to heaven without them, then to be throwne into hell with them: but if thou beest content to lose all these, thou shalt gaine by it. That man that is most forward to suffer any thing for Christ and Gods cause, provides best for himselfe. *Judas* going about to make himselfe rich, lost himselfe, it was his undoing. *Peter* and the rest left all, and gained happinesse. What was *Pauls* making, but his going from prison to prison? how did *Abraham* save his sonne, but by being content to offer him? what was it gained *Moses* so much honour, as to be the leader of Gods people, and to be so great a Prophet, but the losing and refusing his honours and pleasures in *Egypt*? That man that comes to resolve, I will be content to be of no reputation, so I may seeke and serve the Lord, that man is of the rising hand, it is the onely way to preferment: on the contrary, he that saith, I must and will be some body in the world, that man is in his downfall, he is ruining himselfe. *Sauls* thinking to enrich himselfe by the Carrrell, was his ruine; *Ieroboam* by plots to keepe the Kingdome, lost the Kingdome, and undid himselfe.

Vse 3.

Is it of so much consequence to seek God for himselfe? then take heed of forgetting the Lord in the midst of all his mercies. It is an usuall thing, that God is hidden and covered from us in his benefits we receive from him; and whereas they should be as glasses and as spectacles to helpe the weakenesse of our sight of him, they prove often as clouds

clouds to hinder us from beholding his face. But consider, that this is the maine part of the covenant, *I will bee their God, and they shall bee my people.* And upon that tenour come in all benefits, even with himselfe; we doe not usually thinke that we must first have the Lord himselfe; our eyes should be in the first place fixe on him, then on the mercies received from him: for *Rom. 8.* it is said, that *with him*, that is, *Christ he will give us all things.* Therefore first we are to have him, then all things else. So *1 Cor. 3. last*, *All things are yours;* but upon what ground? *for you are Christs, and Christ Gods:* we must first have him for our husband, ere we can enjoy the advantages to be had by him. It is a common fault, that men looke to the comforts and priviledges by Christ, but not to him, he is forgotten. As when we come to be humbled for sinne, men in the first place looke upon a promise of forgiveness of sins, and say, if I can but beleieve my sinnes to be forgiven, and lay hold on that promise, I have enough; but Christ is forgotten by them: but this is not the method we should take, but rather thinke, how shall I have forgiveness? who gives it? who brings it? It is a dowry comes with my husband; when I have Christ once, I shall have his righteousness to cloath me, *1 Cor. 1. 30.* *Of him yee are in Christ Iesus, who of God is made to us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification and redemption.* The meaning of it is, that God the Father gives Christ to us, as a father gives his sonne, as a husband to one in marriage, and sayes, I will make him worth thus much to you, but you must have him

him first ; so doth God give Christ, and when we have him, God makes him all these, *Wisedome* to you as a Prophet, *Righteousnesse* to you as a Priest, and he shall *sanctifie* you and purge you from dead workes, and he shall be your *King*, and deliver you out of the hands of all your enemies, *he shall be made sanctification and redemption to you.* Observe the phrases in Scripture, and they leade you still to his person, and doe urge upon you to make the covenant with his person. As when it is said, *in him are all the treasures of wisedome, &c.* if treasure be hid in a Casket, you must first have the Casket, then the treasure ; so if in a field, you must first buy the field, there is a Mine will hold you digging all your life long ; but you must first purchase the field, and then fall a digging for the treasure in it : and these are all sorts of treasures in him, *Adoption, Iustification, &c.* so *Iohn 6.* he exhorts them *to eat his flesh, and to drinke his bloud*, and that should nourish them to life eternall : but before men can have spirits or strength by meate, they must have that meate it selfe, and there must be a conjunction with it, and assimilation of it to them, and of them to it, so *1 Iohn 5. 12.* *hee that hath the sonne, hath life.* We must have first the Sonne, and then wee come to have life by him ; you must have these two distinct conditions (I suppose a man comming immediately out of the estate of unregeneration) he is first to consider who Christ and God is, consider the persons of them, and so chuse them as a father and an husband, to live and dye with. And then secondly, he is to consider what he shall have with him, yea

to looke upon the benefits themselves, but chiefly to this end, and so as that they may stirre up your hearts to love him the better, and not simply as benefits onely, so as to say in your hearts, though he is most beautifull in his person, and so though I had him alone, I should have an exceeding great reward of himselfe; yet withall when I consider, that all within the compasse of this world is mine, (a great dowry) that *Paul, and Apollos, and all the good Ministers* that ever have beene, have beene for my sake, that whatsoever is in this life or after death is all mine, and that all these hee brings with him (all which you should looke on, as motives entirely to love him, and not as bare benefits) and say, hath not he given me all these? sanctified me, and redeemed me, and set me at liberty, when I was a bondslave of sinne and Sathan, and have I not reason to love him? this is to seeke his presence. It may be though you have done the thing, yet you have not had this distinct consideration; yet use it henceforth to helpe you: Say not, I am in misery, and there is a promise of pardon and adoption, but looke first to the Lord *Iesus*, goe to him and take him. To convince you further of this, there is none of you but will say, I cannot be saved without an holy conversation, and what is that, but to converse with God and Christ: all converse is not with things, but persons, therefore in an holy course, all that you have to do is with the Lord himselfe, to open your hearts to him, to resort to him for counsell, to delight in him: to converse with a man is to deale with him upon all occasions; you are not onely to looke un-
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to, to be dealing with duties alone and priviledges, for then with whom doe you converse? not with the LORD, but with notions, with duties and your sinnes, but your chiefe businesse is with the Lord in all these, and with these as meanes to bring you to the Lord, into his presence and unto his person: this is *to walke with God as Enoch did*, which still respects his person, for so walking with implies.

Againe, no man can bee saved without love to God, and that love must not bee *amor concupiscentia*, but *amor amicitia*, a love of friendship; the one respects things, the other persons: your love must first bee to the person, and then to the commodities you have by him, and the duties you are to performe to him.

Quest.

But you will say, how shall we do to bring our heart to this? this is exceeding hard: It is easie to seeke the benefits come by CHRIST; selfe-love will cause most to doe so. Any man that needs a thing, would faine have his wants supplied. A man that is prest with a burthen would willingly have it taken off: it is easie to have your desires quickened this way.

Answ.

What therefore shall wee say, to set an edg upon your affections, to seeke the Lords person? If wee had the tongue of men and Angells, all would bee too little; therefore let us beseech the Lord, that hee would be his owne spokes-man, and reveale himselfe unto us. There is no way to set our hearts a worke to seeke his face, but by seeing of him: and to helpe you to a sight of him, is not in our power; and

and yet he useth to doe it, whilst we are speaking of him in the ministry of the word. It is said *Psal. 9.* *They that know his name, will trust in him :* and as they will trust in him, so they will *seeke his face.* What was the reason *Abraham* and *Moses* sought the Lord thus for himselfe? because they had seene his face. Thus of *Moses* it is said, hee spake with him *face to face.* There are two wayes to know a man; by report or sight, by heare-say or by face, and this later way have all the Saints knowne him in some degree, and have therefore sought him, though *Moses* in a more particular manner; yet all saw him. *Benevolentia Good-will* sayes *Aristotle,* may arise from a good report, but *Amicitia, Friendship* from sight and acquaintance; that is, we may beare good-will to one of whom we have onely heard a good report, but we doe not come to love him, intirely, and as friends to him, till we have seene him, and doe come to know him, and bee acquainted with him: Therefore though a man have a generall knowledge of him by heare-say, yet he will not seeke his face, till hee hath seene him face to face, *2 Cor. 3. ult.* The Lords face appeares indeed in the word, as in a glasse, but yet till the veile bee taken away, we see him not face to face; therefore in the first place, goe to God and beseech him, and say, Lord shew mee thy face, reveale thy excellency to mee, by thy spirit of revelation, that my heart may bee stirred up to seeke thee; and will the Lord deny you this request if you doe so? no, *No man knowes the Father but the Sonne, and hee to whom the Sonne reveales Him;* sayes *CHRIST.*

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202262

Therefore goe to CHRIST and beseech him to shew you himselfe and his father. The reason wee see not God as wee might, or but by glimpses, is that we forget to go thus to the Son; or if we do, we seeke not earnestly. You know how hardly *Moses* did obtaine this, and you must beg hard as hee did; and when you have obtained this, know you shall see wonderfull things, strange things in him, *which eye hath not seene*. There are wonderfull things to be seene in the Law, if a mans eyes bee opened. *Open my eyes*, sayes *David*, *Psalms*. 119. *that I may see the wonderfull things of thy Law*. How much more wonderfull things are there to bee seene in the Lord, if hee doth but reveale himselfe, and open your eyes? for the Law is but an expression of him; such as is the expression of a man in a Letter or Epistle, of which wee say, it is *Character animi*, it is the portraiture of a mans minde. When therefore your eyes are opened to see the Lord himselfe, you will see such things in him as will make you in love with him. What was the reason, that the Spouse in the *Canticles*, Chapter 5. was *so sicke of love*, that shee could not containe her selfe? but because the Lord had taken away the veile, and shewne himselfe unto her: And so if God would take any of us here into the *Holy of holies*, and into the Presence-chamber, and open himselfe to him, then wee would say as *Thomas* and *Peter* did. Now Lord we will go with thee, now Lord we will live and die with thee, and when wee lose him, wee would seeke him with the Spouse, *from watch to watch*, that is, from one ordinance to another, to finde him, and never leave seeking

seeking, till we had found him; as shee did not, because shee had had a sight of him: As *Moses* could not have this knowledge of God, till it should please God to reveale himselfe to him; so hee would not give over, hee would not stirre a foote, till hee did reveale himselfe to him, *Exod. 33. 13. If I have found favour in thy sight, shew mee thy glory, that I may know thee.* And so should we pray as earnestly as he; and when hee hath made himselfe so knowne to us, that will draw us, and that is the drawing meant *Cant. 1. 3. Draw me, and wee will runne after thee,* that is, shew thy selfe, and wee will follow thee, even as straw followes the jett, or iron the load-stone; and if the Lord will but put the Adamant to the iron, we cannot choose but follow and seeke him. And God doth thus by leaving an impression of himselfe upon the heart, of the amiableness and excellencies that are in him; as when two men are linckt together, so as no consideration can part them, it is by an impression on their hearts of some excellency in each other, till which bee removed, they will not leave off to love and cleave to each other: And so when this impression of Gods excellency is once stampd upon the heart, then nothing can take it off; no accident what ever is able to sever God and the heart, having once seene him: but till this bee wrought, the separation is easie, men will depart from God upon any occasion: when we are taught of God himselfe, we so know him, as it is *Jer. 31. that wee seeke him earnestly, and not till then.*

Besides, after Gods speaking and revealing himselfe, there is something to bee done likewise on

your parts; grow into further acquaintance with him; which is done, partly by speaking much to him, and partly by much observing him in all his wayes. Looke upon him in all his actions and carriages, and thereby you will see how worthy hee is to bee beloved. Consider the first action that ever hee did, making of the World: hee could have enjoyed happinesse within himselfe for ever, as much as now, yet hee was willing out of his goodnesse to make Men and Angells, and to provide abundantly for them, and afterwards when all mankind were at one throw lost, and hee might have left us, as he left the Angells that fell without any possibility of salvation, out of his *φιλανθρωπία*, his love to mankind, his love to the nation, he gave his Sonne to redeeme us: and if it were but for this love to our nation, he is worthy of all love and respect from us, as hee was of the Iewes, that out of his love to their nation built them but one Synagogue: but hee hath not loved the nation only, hath hee not given him, manifested, revealed him unto thee, when he hath passed by thousands? and whereas thou, if left to thy selfe, wouldest have lost the advantage of the possibility of being saved, as the most of mankind do, wouldest have beene hard hearted, as millions of men are: hee hath broken thy heart, and given thee Christ, and that when thou wert utterly unable so much as to beleeve in him: and since hee brought thee home to his Sonne, how often hast thou beene going quite away from him, and hath hee not still beene as a Shepherd to thee, and fetched thee in againe? thou hast plaid many a slippery trick with him.

him, but hee hath kept thee, and embraced thee, and *established the sure mercies of David to thee*, thinke also of his wonderfull patience, that when the eyes of his glory have beene so often and so highly provoked as they have beene day by day, yet hee passeth by all and spares thee. Thinke if any one would ever have borne so much as he hath done. And add to this the consideration of his bountie added to this his patience by him, his constancy in doing thee good; though thou art uneven in thy carriages towards him, yet a continuall current of his mercy flowes in upon thee; and consider further, that if it had beene but a meeere act of his will, to do thus, it had beene wonderfull; but it hath cost him deare to have the opportunity to doe it, it cost him his Sonne: and then consider the great love of his Sonne, that hee would give himselfe, and when hee was equall to his father in glory, would yet leave all to come under the same roote with thee; and what hee hath done, if it had not beene done, thou haddest been undone for ever; and consider how often he hath stood with thee in a strait, pleaded thy case, and pacified his father for thee; and labour to bee led by all these rivers and streames of his goodnesse to that sea of his personall excellencies that are in him; and gather an *Idea* of him into your mindes out of all you have heard or seene of him; the end of all these acts of his providence, is that men might know him by all these. As when you would have a man knowne to another, you goe about to commend him to him, to discribe him; it is good to doe so of the Lord, to be often expressing

his excellencies to others, and meditating of them our selves ; it may perhaps winne others to him ; however it will quicken thy selfe, and exercise thy love towards him. There is a double way of knowing things, as I told you; one by report, another by sight. Doe thou labour to know him by experience, so as to be able to say, I know him to bee thus and thus, and therefore I will cleave to him.

And with all this consider his greatnesse, who it is hath done all these things for thee ; the great God of heaven and earth: this sets an high prize upon all he hath done for us. If a great King doth but cast his countenance on thee, how is it prized ! but that the great God should looke after such a wretch as thou art, not having any thing in thee, why he should respect thee so, how should it affect thee ! And from hence also consider what he is able to doe for thee. Men know not God in his greatnesse, and therefore it is he is not sought unto. Why doe we trouble our selves so much about the creatures, feare this man and that man, and thinke a little credit or preferment a great matter ? if we saw but God in his greatnesse, all these would vanish. See how the Prophet describes him, *Isay* 40. 15. when he sayes, all the nations are but a small thing to him, like the few drops of the bucket and the dust of the ballance ; put the case all the Nations of the world were for thee or against thee, who would not thinke this a great matter (as what would we thinke if we had but one nation against us ?) yet let them be compared to the Lord ; they are but as
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dust blowne away with his breath. If our eyes were but opened to see as *Gehazies* were, the host that was about him, so ours to see the Lord, we should desire him alone, and seeke him : and then a man would be ready for all varieties of changes, put him where you will, he will be content to have Gods favour whilest he lives, and heaven when he dyes, and till this be wrought he doth not seeke God with a perfect heart ; till a man comes to this choyce, I have many things in the world, but the Lord is my portion, and he is my *exceeding great reward* ; and I can live on him alone, it being as impossible for me to have him without comfort as to have the Sunne without light ; so as whatever becomes of him, he is able to say, I have lost nothing, I am not driven out of my inheritance and portion, I have Gods presence, and that will be a direction and a protection to us in hard times, so that we may say, *The Lords Name is a strong Tower*, and though others fly to other refuges, yet *Thither fly the righteous, and are safe*. Thou must seeke Gods presence in time of peace : if thou wouldest have it for thy refuge in time of danger. Both thele we may see, *Isai. 4.* the two last verses. *The Lord will create upon every place of Mount Sion, and upon her assemblies a cloud and smoake by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night*, verse 5. that is, as the People of *Israel* comming out of *Aegypt* had a pillar of fire to guide them by night, and a cloudy pillar by day ; so God promiseth there to his people, I will walke before you, and direct your way in all your actions, in difficult cases. God guides them by an imme-

diat enlightning of his Spirit into those wayes that shall be most safe for them, 1 Sam. 18. 14. *The Lord was with David, and he walked wisely*, God directed him, and was his Counsellor, when as *the Lord departed from Saul*, and he erred in all he did; As the *Israelites*, if their two pillars had beene taken away, they had beene lost in the wilderness; So was *Saul*, when the Lord departed from him, he was as a man wildred in a darke night: whereas a godly man shall have *a voyce behinde him saying, this is the way, walke in it*; whereas if he went another way, he should breake his necke; and what a great priviledge is this?

But that is not all the benefit which the presence of God doth afford us, but it gives protection also; as that place in *Isay* shewes: for it followes, *upon all the glory shall be a defence, and there shall be a Tabernacle for a shadow in the day time from the heate, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the storme and from the raine*; that is, looke what a shadow is to a poore traveller in the time of scorching heate, in those hot Countries; that will the Lords presence be to all his Saints, and it shall be *a Covert also*; they shall be under it, as under a rooffe, stand like one in an house dry, that looks out and sees others in a storme: as when the *Aegyptians* were beaten with haile, and perisht in it, the *Israelites* were safe.

And lastly, he will be *a refuge* to them, when they are persecuted by any, whether it be by their owne sinnes which follow them, as the avenger of bloud, or by evill men, or the power and malice of *Sathan*; if they run to him, he will be their *Asylum*,
their

their Sanctuary. See this difference privilege of the Saints from others in *Mordecai* and *Haman*; both were in distresse. *Mordecai* was persecuted, he flew to the Lord by prayer, and had him for a refuge; but *Haman* had none, when he was out with the King: So both *Peter* and *Judas* fell into sinne; but *Peter* had a refuge to fly to, even God, whom he had bene formerly acquainted withall; but *Judas* had none; and so the storme fell on him: so *Saul* being to fight with the *Philistines* had no refuge, *God was departed from him*, and therefore he fled to a witch: but *David* when hee was in as great a streight, and the people talkt of stoning him, he had a refuge, *he encouraged himselfe in his God*: and therefore you find it so often repeated by him, *God is my shield, and the rocke of my defence*. In faire weather men care for no such shelter, because they thinke they need it not; but remember, a storme may come, and it is good to provide against a rainy day, 2 *Rev. 5.* when the Church was *falne from her first love*, he threatneth to *rem.ve the Candlesticke*, whereby he meanes not the ministry only, as appears by the last verse of the first Chapter: *The seven Candlesticks thou sawest are the seven Churches*, and therefore Captivity is thereby threatned, a removal from that City which was a place of ease and safety, into a barren land where they should live more hardly. And this is threatned, not because they had utterly forsaken, but were fallen from their first love, and some degrees of it. What cause have we then to feare? and if so, what cause is there we should now *seeke the Lords presence*? and then

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202262

we shall be sure to find him a refuge ; for go whither thou wilt, *He is there.* Psal 139. *Whether into the furthest parts of the earth, or the heart of the Sea, thou art there,* sayes David, and as nothing is so terrible to the wicked as that ; goe whither they can, God is there ; so nothing is more comfortable to the Godly.

Now we are come to the last condition, which the Lord requires, before he will heare prayers and forgive their finnes, or heale the land of his people; and that is, *If my people turne from their evill wayes.* Whence you may observe this Doctrine.

Doct. 8. That except a man doe turne from his evill wayes, hee can have no interest in the promises of the Gospell. Now this poynt, as the rest, hath a double office. The one is to shut out those, to whom the promises belong not ; *If you turne not from your evill wayes,* your prayers shall not be heard : Another to open a doore of comfort to them that doe it, their prayers shall be heard.

But first for matter of terror to those without ; and herein our method shall be, first to know what it is *to turne from our evill wayes* ; for when the Lord shall hang all his promises upon these conditions, we have reason to examine them narrowly. Wherefore for the conceiving of this, we must know, that every man is borne backward into the world, with his *backe turned upon God, and his face toward sinne* and hell, and so continues, till he heare some call from God to the contrary, saying, *That is not the way,*

way, &c. So that this conversion of the soule is called a *turning*, because it is from one terme or object to another, that is, from sinne to righteousness, from Sathan to God. And because there are many false turnings, and many men that wheele about and never turne truly, who yet suppose that they are converted, therefore we will endeavour to open to you, this true turning. Now it may be found out foure wayes. First by *the causes* of it or motives upon which. Secondly, by *the termes* from which and to which we turne. Thirdly by *the manner*. Fourthly by *the effects*.

First, for *the causes* of this solid, true turning, and the motives which worke upon a mans heart to turne him; you must know, that there are many things may cause a man to leave his evill ways for a while; As it may be, some present affliction, for the avoyding of which a man may seeme to turne unto God. Therefore God still complaines of the Iewes, that *they turned*, but *fainedly* unto him, and not with the whole heart, because *when he slew them, then they sought to him*, and then they would turne from their evill wayes; but when they were delivered, they turned to their old *Bias* againe. So *Pharaoh*, when as he was plagued with any new Iudgement, then *hee would let the Israelites goe*, but as soone as that was off, *he hardened his heart, and would not let them goe*.

As also a second cause to move men to turne may be some present commodity. This doth appeare in many of those that applied themselves to Christ: some did it *for the leaves*, and some for
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their convenient living, some for the hope of an earthly Kingdome, which they thought he would have brought ; but these all left him afterwards. There be many such false motives, but the onely true motives : re taken from the apprehension of eternall life and eternall death : the conversion is not right till then, and the reason is, because all other motives may be overballanced ; But the motives of life and death cannot be over topped by any thing ; If preferment be offerd, or what ever the world can offer : but these exceed all that *Sathan*, or the world, or the flesh can suggest. Therefore a man is then turned, when the Lord shall enlarge his thoughts, to see the greatnesse and the vastnesse of these two ; for then all those other things appeare but as Candles in the Sunshine : So that if *Sathan* come with earthly honours and pleasures in his hand, the answer will be easie, but *what are these to eternall death, and everlasting life ?* and these are not thought of nor considered by carnall men: though they talke of heaven and hell, yet they see not the immense vastnesse and latitude of them, and therefore goe on so confidently, hence Christ in *Marke 16.* when he sends forth his Disciples to convert men, hee bids them use these two arguments. Tell every man *if hee beleive hee shall bee saved ; if not, hee shall bee damned.* Where wee see the motives that Ministers are to use by Christs direction, are eternall life and death : And Saint *Paul* endeavouring to convert *Felix*, told him of the *Iudgement to come*, which made him to tremble : And *Christ* told the woman of *Samaria* of
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that water and spring, that flowes up to eternall life.

Consider therefore whether ever thou hadst a true apprehension of these, without which a man cannot be thoroughly wrought upon; which apprehension if true, hath these conditions in it.

First it must be an apprehension of them as present: for happily a man may have a slight thought of eternall life and death, he may looke upon them as things absent and as farre off; but when they are set on by God, a man is pursued and brought into streights by the apprehensions of them, so as he hath no rest till he be translated into another condition. A carnall man on his death bed, having an actuall apprehension of hell as present, is strangely affected. Now at conversion, the apprehension of these seizeth upon a man by a worke of the Spirit, and compasses him about so, as he cannot shake it off, till he turnes to God. *The wise man sees the plague before-hand*, even as present: and therefore stayes not till it comes: but turnes in the time of youth, health and strength.

Secondly, it must be a *deepe, fix'd, and settled apprehension*; for sometimes a man that shall never be saved, may be moved with the present apprehension of eternall death, and life; but it is as a storme soone blowne over, but in him that shall bee saved, it is set on by the *spirit of bondage*, and such an impression made, as will never out, but he still remembers it; and this is that true apprehension which movest to repentance.

But some will say, can a man be wrought upon by the meere apprehensions of eternall life and death,

Object.

20226.2

death, to turne from his evill wayes, without an apprehension of sin and grace?

Ans.

When a man hath a true apprehension of eternall life and death, he comes to know what *sin and Grace* is, and never before: till a man knowes eternall death, he looks on sin as a trifle, as a thing of nought; therefore the wise man saith, *they despise their waies*; but this apprehension is it, which helps to present sinne in its lively colours, and so also the price of grace is then understood, when it is apprehended, as drawing with it everlasting happinesse, as the needle drawes the thread.

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The second thing is the consideration of the termes, for there is no turning without going from one terme to another; and there is no true turning, except it be from Sathan, and the creature, and your owne selves to God. Of this you reade in *Acts 26. 18.* that *Saint Paul was sent to open their eyes, and to turne them from darkenesse to light, and from the power of Sathan unto God, &c.* You see these the termes of true turning; and this is especially to be marked: for if there be no more then a turning from misery to happinesse, it is not sound; for if you look upon sinne, and misery, grace and happinesse as in themselves without respect to God, you doe but turne upon your owne hinges, as axle-trees, you goe but different wayes to the same center, that other wicked men goe unto, so long as you looke only at the misery and the happinesse of your selves alone, which is the center of all mankind. Therefore in a true conversion, these motives are lookt upon in relation to God, as thus; if I follow my selfe

selfe and the creature, they are never able to save me ; but if I apply my selfe to him that *hath the keyes of life and death*, I shall be happy in him for ever: therfore henceforth I will forsake *Satan* and every creature, and apply my selfe onely to *the Lord*. And upon this ground a man makes this resolution with himselfe, I will forsake *Sathan* and subject my selfe to God ; for he onely is the author of true happinesse : so that now God is made *a tearme*, to which thou turnest and appliest thy selfe. *Hose 7.16 They returned, but not to the most high, &c.* There is a turning made mention of it, and one would thinke, in a speciall manner ; for they fasted, they prayed, but this was no turning to God ; and why ? because yee have turned but from misery, and sought your owne happinesse, and ye *have forgotten me*, saith the Lord, who am the most High and only able to deliver and save you ; and therefore their turning was counterfeit, not true ; this will nothold, such will start aside like a broken bow.

Thirdly, for the manner of *turning*, as it is exprest in Scripture, you must *turne to the Lord with all your heart, and all your soule* ; though it be not exprest here, yet it is to bee understood, *If my people turne from their evill ways with their whole hearts.*

But what is this turning with a mans whole heart ?

Quest.

A man is then said *to turne with his whole heart*, when hee is fully enlightened and convinced in his understanding of the evill of a thing, and thereupon doth take a full resolution to forsake it : As if a man bee going out of the way, and another man come

Answ.

202262

come and tell him hee is not in the right way, which will leade him to his journeyes end ; if hee bee fully perswaded of this, hee will returne, and that with all his heart, as wee use to say, when we doe a thing willingly : So it is here, if a man be fully perswaded that sinne is the cause of all misery, and God of happinesse, hee turnes to God with his whole heart. Now unlesse it bee with the *whole heart*, this turning is but *fained* ; as appears by that in *Ier. 3.10.* *And yet for all this, her treacherous sister Iudah hath not turned unto mee with her whole heart, but fainedly, saith the Lord* ; which falls out, when men have some motives to move them, but not enow ; they are not fully convinced, and so they turne but by halves. When therefore the illumination is perfect and full, that these wayes wherein hee walkes will bring him to misery, and the contrary to happines, then a man perfectly *turnes*, and with his *whole heart* : and because turning thus with the *whole heart* followes full conviction, therefore the Apostle doth expresse this turning by the phrase of opening the eyes, *Acts 26. 18.* *To open their eyes and to turne them. &c.* that is, every man goes on in his wayes of sinning, till his eyes bee opened, to see the thing which hee saw not before : and God many times meets men in the midst of their wayes, and gives them some light and meanes, as some exhortations and motions to good, some checks for their evill wayes : and if those admonitions be so farre effectuell, as to open their eyes, that is, to convince and perswade them, that the way they goe in leades to eternall misery, then doe they turne and are willing to

to do it. And therefore also on the contrary, when God will not heale and convert a people, hee suffers not their eyes to bee opened, as in *Esay 16. 10.* *Make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavie, and shut their eyes, least they see with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and understand with their hearts, and convert to bee healed.* Where we see, that the first chaine of our conversion is the opening of the eyes, the second chaine is the opening of the heart, the third is to bee converted and healed; and the two former will draw on the last: and because the Lord is resolved not to heale them, therefore their eyes must be shut up. But at conversion mens eyes are opened to see sin comming against them, even as an enemy with a sword in his hand, and to see the riches of the inheritance of the Saints, which neither the eyes of naturall men have seene, nor their eares heard, nor their hearts understood. And then is a man turned from his evill wayes, and not before. A man goes on in a course of sinning, as *Balaam* did in his way; hee met an *Angell* with a drawne sword, but saw him not at the first: so soone as his eyes were opened, there needed no more perswasions to move him to turne: So a wicked man goes on in a way, wherein hee runnes upon the swords point, and he sees it not; but when his eyes are opened to see it, then hee turnes backe, and when they are thus turning backe, like *Gehazi*, *2 Kings 6. 15, 16, 17.* who (seeing an army comming against him and his Master *Elisha*) he cries out, *Alas, what shall wee doe, if wee goe on?* and *Elisha* answered, *fear not: for they are more that be with us then they that be with them:* and so *Gehazi* saw when

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202262

God opened his eyes : So doe men when they set upon a new course, they meete with many oppositions and dangers in the way, which makes them cry, alas, what shall we doe? then God openeth their eyes, and they see also more with them than against them : they see the glorious priviledges that they have, and the strength that they received from *God* : these things encourage them, that they goe on resolutely, because that the latter are farre greater than the former.

Lastly, to finde out what this true turning unto God is, wee must consider the effects of it : Now a man is then turned, when he finds these three effects wrought in him.

I First hee findeth that *those evill wayes of sinne*, and those corruptions which before did dwell in his heart and had the rule there, are now put out of possession, and the contrary grace is made master of the house ; so that hee can say with the Apostle *Rom. 7. It is not I, but sinne in mee*, that is, sinne sometimes was the master of the house, and that which I now call my selfe, as then *was not*, had no existence in mee ; but now the case is altered, the regenerate part, that is in mee is master, and though sinne thrusts in and *dwells* there also, yet it is but an intruder, no lust but is thrust out ; and if it creepes in, it is by one of these wayes.

First, either *stealing in*, as a *thiefe*, by night, when they do not watch and see it, or secondly it breaks in by violence, as *rebells* taking the advantage of some strange passion, so as they are not able to resist it, yet sinne dwells not there as master, for
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it is expeld as soone as the rebell is found, as so one as strength is recovered, so as possession is still kept by grace, that as it is said of peace, *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts*, that is, though you bee ready to fall out with your brethren, yet let not malice rule, but peace. Now what is said of one grace, is true of all : so then examine thy selfe, how comes sinne in into thee ? comes it in by stealth or by violence onely ? and when it is come in, does it continue master ? then thou art not turned to God : for if thou wert truly turned to God, though sinne did creepe in as a thiefe, yet thou wouldest not suffer it to take possession of the house, but you would cast it forth ; and if it did breake in by violence, yet when thou hadst recovered thy strenght, when thou hadst got the hill, that is, the upper hand, thou wouldest keepe it under.

The second effect is this, that when hee hath thrust out sinne, then hee hates it, as *Amnon* did his sister *Thamar* ; he not only thrust her out of doores, and barred the doore on her, but also hee hated her worse, than ever hee had loved her. So a man that is turned doth hate sinne, hate it as truly as ever hee did love it before. There is none but the regenerate man that hates sin truly. Suppose a man hath lived a long time in some sinne, it may bee in drunkenesse, or whoredome, swearing, &c. hee may sometimes thrust it out of doores, and by a resolution upon some grounds barre the doore against it ; as when he lyes on his sicke bed, or is in some great affliction, but doth not hate it.

You will say how shall wee know that ?

Quest.

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Hatred

202262

Answ.

Hatred is implacable, and for ever, as in a man towards Toads and Serpents, hee will never be perswaded to receive it again, and to grow friends with it, but he forsakes it for ever. And againe secondly, hee will never mince the matter with sinne, and say, thus farre will I lop and cut up my sinne, but hee will plucke it up by the rootes : Hatred desires the utter abolition and destruction of what it hates. Thirdly, he will hate all kindes of sinnes. Sheepe hate all kind of Wolves, and the Dove all kind of Hawkes ; therefore examine thy selfe by these generalls.

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The third effect is this, *fighting against it* : The truth of turning is scene by a mans resistance all a mans life; as the Israelites were never to seeke peace with *Amalek*, but to fight against them, to seeke the destruction of them while they lived. Indeed it is true, such a man may bee foyled by a sinne, but still hee fights against it ; and so wee will, if wee bee truly converted.

Therein then is the difference betweene the relapse and backsliding of the wicked, and the falling of the godly into some sinne. A Saint never gives over the warre, hee never enters into league with sin. *The spirit lusteth against the flesh, Gal 5.* that is, will be ever stirring him up against it; all the world cannot make peace, where God hath put enmity : Thou wilt never come to say, I cannot chuse, I must needs yeeld to it : but thou wilt never give over ; for that is the property of one truly converted; to looke on sin as an enemy, and whatsoever helps him against sinne, hee accounts his friend, as admonitions

nitions, and reproofes, and whatsoever helps sinne against him, hee accounts his enemy.

But you will say, if all this bee to bee done, I cannot say, I hate sinne, for it hangs on mee continually, and I finde an aptnesse to delight in it as before.

Object.

It is true, that there is something in thee, the flesh to which sinne is as suitable as ever it was : hence the aptnes to entertaine it, that is ready to become as friendly to it as ever it was. Yet againe the frame is such, as there is something in thee, namely a new creature, a new selfe, thy regenerate part, that hates sinne with a deadly hatred, yea and the flesh also which fosters it. So then this may be thy comfort that the spirit that is in thee hates sinne, at the same time, that the flesh which is in thee delights in it.

Answer.

If this turning unto the Lord be a condition on which all the promises are put ; then it stands you upon to examine your selves, whether any way of wickednesse bee found in you ; if it bee, bee it greater or smaller, then you are not converted, you are still *in the bond of iniquity* (it is the Apostles phrase to *Simon Magus* ; *Acts*) that is, tyed up in it as in a bond, shackled in it, as a man still in prison and bound in fetters ; thou art a fettered bond-slave : For when there is any way of wickednesse in thee, it so bindes the soule, that a man is not able to *runne the wayes of Gods Commandements*. Looke backe therefore upon thy former wayes, search thy heart as thoroughly and narrowly as they did for the leaven before the Passeover ; search as it were for thy life, because if there bee a way of wickednesse, it

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202262

will cost thee thy life. Search also diligently, for selfe-love makes it hard to find it out. This point needs application more than explication; the businesse here is more with the heart than with the head. Put case it bee a way of enmity, having an evill eye towards such a man, though thy enemy; if thou goe on in it, thou art in a way of wickednesse. It is the LORDS command, that thou shouldest *overcome evill with good*, and that thou shouldest *love thine enemies*; and therefore you are your owne utter enemies, in walking in a way of enmity against others. Say it bee the way of evill speaking, which comes nigh to enmity (and therefore I speake of it in this next place) in *Titus 3. 2. Speake evill of no man*. You must not speake evill of any man, though he be truly wicked; for you your selves were such, saith the Apostle, and therefore doe it not, to make a custome of this; when thou hast any opportunity, and when any man will give thee the hearing: this is a way of wickednesse. It is one thing to fall in to it beyond a mans purpose, another to give a mans selfe liberty in it. It may bee done, for the good of the party, or when it concernes GODS glory, but not of envie. Again, suppose it bee a way of idlenesse, which men of all callings are subject to; consider that if thou wert free from all other sins, and yet wert idle, thou art in a way of wickednesse. The Apostle speakes much against idle persons, as *2 Thes. 3. 10. For even when wee were with you, this wee commanded you, that if any would not worke, neither should hee eate, &c.* that is, it is such a sione, as he is not worthy to live, that lives in it; as for scholars

lars that are sent hither with a price in their hands to learne the knowledge of G o d, and his true religion, for these to spend their time idly, of all other they are not worthy to live. If Saint Paul may be Iudge, thou canst not be saved, because this is a way of wickednesse. Art not thou the Lords servant : doth not he give thee thy wages ? Suppose it not a positive way of sinning in it selfe, yet that will follow upon it, *Omnis omisio fundatur in aliquo actu voluntatis affirmativo*, the reason why a man neglects to doe what he should, is because he doth what he should not : and therefore, 2 *Thes.* 3. 11. he calls those idle persons busie bodys, because whilest idle, they are busie about something else, as good fellowship, drinking, or happily recreations, which though in themselves lawfull, yet are most unlawfull, when a man makes a trade of them.

This way of idlenesse is usuall amongst men, and mispending time is counted no sinne, if a man have enough living but to maintaine him. But consider how vehement the Apostle is against all such, 2 *Thes.* 3. from the sixth to the thirteenth, speaking of the same persons, *I command you brethren in the Name of the LORD IESUS, that you withdraw your selves from every brother that walkes disorderly, &c.* he gives it not from himselfe, but it is a command from Christ : and besides he sayes, he that walkes idly walkes inordinately, that is, besides his rule, which is to be painefull in his calling ; therefore he is like a souldier out of his ranke, a member out of joynt ; yea saith the Apostle, *let him not eat.* He names a punishment in nature suitable to it ; as if

202262

he had said, nature hath taught you so much, it is a rule ingrafted in nature ; and therefore you see drones cast out of the hive, and you see stones and all things that ly still continually, that they eat not as beasts doe, this is a mother sinne, it was the sinne of *Sodome*. *Salomon* often toucheth upon the slug-gard, and speakes against him. As there may be a way of wickednesse by being idle, so by minding our *earthly businesse* too much ; against such the Apostle speakes, *Phil. 3. 19. minding earthly things : whose end is damnation* ; minding, that is, being so content, that they minde it continually ; whereas men should be so conversant in the world, and *use it, as if they used it not : buy and marry, as if they married not* ; let it bee a by-businesse, do it as if you did it not, and be so diligent in them, as that the maine of our intentions be reserved for better things, as getting of grace, &c. otherwise we forget the maine errand, for which we came into the world, to make our calling and election sure, and intend that w^{ch} we should do, but by the by. This is a fault even amongst Gods people in part, as we may see in *Martha*, who troubled her selfe about many things, but *Mary* left all to heare *Christ* preach ; and *Christ* upon that occasion teacheth us, that he makes the better choyce, that takes more time from his calling to bestow on better things. Marke the reasons which *Christ* useth, why *Mary* chofe the better part. First, because this alone is needfull, that one thing necessary. There are many worldly things required to make up our content. *Thou art troubled about many things* (saith he to *Martha*) but this

this one thing is sufficient ; and againe, many other things may be spared, but this is that *one thing necessary* : and againe, this one thing *shall not bee taken from thee* ; she shall enjoy it for ever, and it will accompany you to heaven, whereas death will strip *Martha* of those outward things, bring care and vexation of spirit, as in *Martha*, she was *cumbered*, so that *Maries* part was the better, and let us also chuse it.

Againe, there is a way of wickednesse which *Salomon* often toucheth upon and speaketh against, a *false ballance*, whereby he meanes any kind of unjust dealing in trading, putting off slight wares with a good glosse, any such way : such an hidden mystery of unequall gayning, it is *an abomination to the Lord*, saith *Salomon*. Is this the exercising of your callings, for the good of men ? no, for the hurt of them, and the destruction of your owne soules ; likewise if there be any such secret way of sinning found in thee, as the Apostle speakes of, *1 Thes. 4. 4.* that *every one of you should know how to possesse his vessell in sanctification and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence* ; by vessell he meanes soule and body, which were made wholly *for the Lord* to put his grace into : take heede therefore of any such lust of uncleanness. The Apostle meanes no particular Act ; therefore if there be any such secret way of uncleanness of what kind soever, thou art yet in a miserable estate : for I tell thee, if thou hadst any worke of regeneration, would it not resist every kind of siane ? if any true tendernes of conscience, thou wouldest be sensible of every way
of

20226a

of wickednesse; as tender flesh is of every pricke, or the eye of every mote: but you will say, the best may fall into these finnes: *Answer*, yes, but they make not a path of them: Wicked men take their walkes in sinne, yee shall find them there day by day; but not so with a godly man, he never drawes a course of sinne as a threed through his whole life. When there are ten thousand wayes to one place, any one is enough to leade to it; there are many wayes leade to hell, and any way of sinne leades to hell, though but one; and therefore thou belongest to Sathans division, and not to the Lord, unlesse thou canst say as Saint Paul and those *Corinths*, whereas *I was sometimes a blasphemor and uncleane, now I am sanctified and washed*: Thus thou must bee able to say of every evill way, or thou shalt not be saved.

As for the commission of sinne, so for the omission of duties, suppose it bee neglecting of *G o d s* ordinances, as hearing the word, as it is a custome for some to be absent, it is a monstrous thing that men should bee so openly prophane, manifesting to all the world that they lie in a way of wickednesse. So for negligent performance of duties, which will come up to the same degree of guilt with finnes of omission, and bee reckoned as if you had not done them, thou maiest have a way of wickednesse in the way of performance of duties: for *G o d* commands the manner of the duty as well as the substance. A man happily will not neglect the duty, and yet negligently performes it. Now *C H R I S T* bids us not onely to heare, but to *take heede how we heare*

heare, namely, in such a maner, as that we should get strength by every powerfull Sermon.

If thou findest not thy heart to be softned, which was hard before, and wrought upon, I may say thou hast not heard : So in prayer, when prayer brings not thy heart into order, which before was off the hinges, thou hast not prayed. Remember that the manner is commanded as well as the substance. So for the communion of Saints, we are charged *not to forsake the fellowship of Saints*, therefore it is a way of wickednes not to be found amongst them. What can you say for your selves that neglect this command? how canst thou looke to have thy prayers heard, thy sinnes forgiven? So for thy speeches, they ought to be profitable, *ministring grace to the hearers*, affording not drosse but fine silver, *Pro. 10. 20. The tongue of the just is as choise Silver*, and this alwayes. *Let your speech bee gracious alwayes. Col 4.* not onely by fits.

So for family duties, looke, if there be no way of wickednesse there. *Ephes. 6. 4. Children and servants ought to bee brought up in the nurture of the Lord.* This you ought to doe to your servants : for when they are delivered to you, you are become as parents to them. *Deut. 6. 7.*

There is a strict command to rehearse the way of God upon all occasions. Those families wherein nothing is done for the bringing them up in the wayes of the Lord, have a way of wickednesse in them, and search it out.

I have insited the longer upon particulars, because it is the spreading of the net that catcheth the fish

fish. Therefore Saint *Paul* condescends to particulars, whereas hee might have contented himselfe with generalls, *Rom. 1. 29.* as being filld with all unrighteousnesse. But hee adds a catalogue of many particulars; *fornication, wickednesse, covetousnesse, maliciousnes, full of envie, murther, debate, &c.* So *1 Cor. 6. 9.* the Apostle sayes, *Know you not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdome of God?* that might have beene enough in the generall, yet hee brings in a catalogue of many particulars; *Bee not deceived, no fornicator, nor drunkard, &c. shall inherit the kingdome of God,* as if hee should have sayd, should I stay my selfe in these generall tearmes, you would be ready to shift it off, therefore I speake it of every particular course, of sinning. When a man is to shoote at a multitude of birds, he puts not in one bullet only, but haile-shot, so when wee are to speake to many people, wee are to make application of many particulars. *Nathan* applyed his message in particular to *David*, and if Ministers should omit it, yet the people should themselves bring generalls to particulars in applying the word to themselves at home, and in applying these particulars let them consider the Doctrine delivered, that if there bee any of these or any other way of wickednesse in a man, hee cannot bee saved.

And though many will bee ready to say, wee know this already, it is no newes to us; yet I feare that if the hearts of men were ransacked and searched, it would bee found they believed it not, but that they thinke they may lie in some little sinne, and yet bee saved by the mercies of God in Christ,
for

for if they thought not so, they would not bee so bold to lie in sin as they are: therefore doth the Apostle upon this occasion stil put in this Caveat, *be not deceived*, as in *Ephes. 5. 6. Let no man deceive you with vaine words: because of these things commeth the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience*, as if he had said; every man is apt to think, that notwithstanding such courses of disobedience hee may bee saved, therefore take heed saies he, such advertisements as these the Apostle doth often use: As *1 Cor. 6. 9.* it is as if one should say to a traveller asking him of the way, that at such and such a place there is a by-turning; if you take not heed, if you marke it not, you may bee deceived, and goe out of your way. Many have lost their wayes there. So, *bee not deceived*, saith the Apostle, it is twentie to one you will in this particular. Wee are ready to thinke God a God all of mercie, and to see the greatnesse of Gods justice requires spirituall eyes; therefore though you know this, yet consider it: there are many things which wee know, and doe not know them, wee see and doe not see them, that is, we doe not consider them as wee should: and the Divell is apt for to delude us, saying, such a small sinne may stand with salvation: and therefore it is no wonder, if many erre. I may say of that man, that is fully perswaded of this, that to lie in any small sinne whatsoever will condemne him, a thousand to one if that man will be turned.

Yet take this in to explicate it, that notwithstanding a little swerving, a mans estate may bee good: but it is continuing in it makes it a way.

For

202262

For if you judge a man by a step or two, you will judge amisse of him ; therefore I say, it must bee a way of wickednesse : the ground is, because a way of wickednesse proceeds from the roote, from the frame of the heart, which a man will returne to againe, bee it good or bad ; for howsoever a godly man may be transported for a time, yet he returnes againe to his former course. On the contrary, a wicked man may bee hedged in for a piece of his way by education, so as hee cannot goe out : So *Isaiah* was hedged in by *Iehoiada*, and went strait on for many yeares ; but consider what way you take, when you come to the lanes end, when you are your owne men, at your owne choice.

And therefore, because wee are upon a point of salvation and damnation, wee had need distinguish exactly : And that which puts us to distinguish in this point, is that a regenerate man may have many relapses into wayes forsaken, and wicked men may have stands in their evill wayes, and sometimes turne out of them, and performe many duties, and goe farre in obedience to the Law.

Quest.

The question is, how shall we doe to distinguish this ? it will serve to unmaske the one, and comfort the other.

Answ.

Observe three rules, to finde the differences.

1 In regard of the search made for sinne, an upright hearted man ; if there be any ambiguous case, in his whole life, he is willing to be informed to the full, to referre himselfe to the word and good men, for the finding out what is right ; when himselfe doubts, hee would bee glad to bee resolved, and would

would love him that would doe it. *Lord try mee* (saith *David*,) *if there be any way of wickednesse in me*, which was a signe of the uprightnesse of his heart. When the heart is not sound, when a man is not willing to come to tryall, as *Iohn* 3. 20. 21. whence this difference is taken, *Every man that doth truth*, that is, upright hearted, *comes to the light*; but *hee that doth evil, hates the light*. The one desires his deeds might bee brought to the light, but the other hates it, because hee would not have his deeds knowne: It is spoken of the Pharisees, who tooke it in scorne to have their uprightnesse questioned by our Saviour. And this is sincerity *εὐκρίνεια*, as the Apostle calls it, when a man is willing to have all his actions brought to the Sunne-beames, as that word impliyes, that if there bee any flaw in them, they may bee discovered and amended; hee desires not that they may bee kept in darke shops like bad ware, but brought to his view and discovery: therefore the upright delights most in the company of those that are freest from his sinne, they appeare most beautifull in his eyes, and hee loves a ministry that speakes to that particular; every one is desirous to heare evill spoken of hisemie, that sinne is his greatestemie; therefore you could not have done *David* a better turne, then *Abigail* and *Nathan* did to tell him of his fault, or a worse to *Amaziah* and *Ieroboam*, then the Prophets did, when they reprov'd them; hee that would have a building downe, is glad of those that come with pickaxes, but if hee would have it stand, hee cannot endure any body that should offer to meddle with it; so the strong holds of sinne being

being to be puld downe, a godly man likes him that will helpe him against them, when conscience doubteth such a course is not good, which yet is ambiguous. If thou be loth to have it examined to the full, it is a signe thou hast a false heart, and art desirous to continue in it. It is a sweet morsell to thee, *Iob 20. 12.* when sinne is kept as an ulcer which thou wilt not have a man come nigh to, it is a signe thou lovest it, and art not turned from it.

2 There is a great difference in the ground and principle of a godly mans abandoning sinne, and obeying the Law, from that which is in an unregenerate man, that is not truly turned, though he may goe farre in both; for the upright hearted man hath not only some present checks, and transient resolutions to leave sinne, but there is a law stamped upon his mind, whereby to resist the law of sinne, forever, this law the other wants. *Rom. 7. 23. I see a law in my members, warring against the law of my minde.* To a man truly converted there is a double law; the outward written in Scripture, the inward printed in his heart, which is able to guide him: Therefore sayes the Apostle, *1 Tim. 1. 8. The law was not given for the righteous,* that is, it is not given to him, as to others; for others having no law in them, must therefore be pressed only with that without, but it is (as it were needles to the other) he hath one in his minde continually, opposing the law of sin.

Now because the explication of what this *law of the minde* is, will exceedingly conduce to cleare this difference the more, I will further shew what this *law of the minde* is.

It is an inward habit of holinesse agreeing with the Law of God, as a picture with the prototype answering in every respect unto it.

And it is called a law, because it commands powerfully, as a Law which hath authority in it; effectually inclining and carrying the heart on to do what the Law without commands; and on the contrary, it doth forbid with efficacy and power the committing of sin, and it hath this power in it, because it is the very power, vertue and fruit of the resurrection of *Christ*, and is the immediate worke of the Spirit, who is stronger then Satan, the world, and the flesh.

And likewise, because as a law it rewardeth and punisheth, refreshing the obedient with peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, and when a man disobeyes it, it causeth griefe and wounds the heart; that law in *David* smote him when he had numbred the people, and caused *Peter* to weep bitterly. And in the second place it is called the law of the mind, because though it sanctifies the whole, yet it is most in the mind; as the Law of the members is called so, because in a regenerate man, it is strongest in the members, and least in the mind and will. This law doth both enlighten the mind with saving operative knowledge of God and his law, and stamps all the habits of grace upon his will, *Iere.* 32. 4. An unregenerate man, may through his conscience enlightened, give a stop to evill courses; but without such a law as this.

This being thus explained, the difference betweene a naturall conscience enlightned and this

P Law

202262

Law of the mind stands in these effects.

The first is taken from the phrase it selfe, when it is called the law of the mind: it having a differing worke upon the mind, from that which the light of conscience hath; for the knowledge this Law stamps upon the mind, differs from that which is brought into the conscience of a naturall man.

I

Though an unregenerate man may first know the Law, and 2. may consent to it, that it is good; yet a regenerate man that hath this law of the mind goes further, and consents to it as good for him: this is the meaning of that which the Apostle says, verse 15. that *hee consents to the Law, that it is good*: and therefore it hath this same worke upon his mind, as concerning also that he allowes it not, verse 16. that is not as good for him, *pro hic & nunc*. This the other wants for want of light, whereby the Holy Ghost convinceth a regenerate man, that it is best for him to obey the Law, at such and such times, in all circumstances; and when he comes to act it upon all occasions, by answering all objections; the other sees it good in it selfe, but not for him in such and such circumstances. An envious man first knowes what is good, secondly consents that it is excellent, but thirdly not that it is good for him; and so also though an unregenerate man allowes sin to be evill in it selfe, yet not for him in such and such circumstances.

Object.

But then you will object, it seemes then that the knowledge of a carnall man and a regenerate man differ, but in degrees, not in kind.

Answ.

The want of degrees here alters the kind, as in numbers

numbers the addition of a degree alters the *species* and kind.

2

This law of the mind, puts a lusting into the soule against that which is evill, and to that which is good, *Gal. 5. 17.* So as he is not onely stirred up to his duty by conscience, but he hath an inward inclination also thereunto; and so for sin, this law doth put a strong inclination into the faculties, which doth not onely repress the outward acts, but it weakens the habits of sin by a contrary ingredient: but the light of conscience, though it may weaken the act, yet not the habit. So *Gal. 5. 24.* not onely the acts are restrained, but the lusts are crucified, the vigour of them is abated by a contrary lusting, a lusting passeth through every faculty which weakens it. Now nothing is weakened, but by that which is contrary; if therefore we look to repressing of outward acts therein, they both agree; and againe, if we looke to the abatement of a lust and no more, we also may be deceived; but if the habit of sin be weakened by a contrary lusting, then it is from grace, and the law of the mind.

3

The difference is in the willingnesse to performe what is good, and to abstaine from evill. To will is present with me, says the Apostle in that seventh Chapter: another act of provokements of conscience, may do what is good; but to will it, and to will it heartily with all the bent of the soule and the sway of it; he is not able to say he doth so, *1 Tim. 1. 9.* The Law is not given to a righteous man, that is, he hath a Law of Grace in him, that puts

P 2

him

202262

him on to good without this law; as if he had said, this law without might as it were be spared to this man, he being a law to himselfe, *but it is given to the unrighteous*, that is, he would do nothing without this, he hath not in himselfe a strong inclination to what is good, and averfenesse to evill, as the other hath, *Rom. 7 15. I hate the evill that I doe*; he hates the evill which the Law forbids, and longs after what the Law commands. The Law is put upon the wicked, as a restrainer to keepe him in, he lookes upon the Commandements, as chaines and shackles; but a regenerate man lookes on them, as upon girdles and garters, which gird up his loines and expedite his course the better. The Law confines a regenerate man to live in that element, where he would live; as if one should be confined to Paradise, where he would be, though there were no such law. But another man is confined by it to the place where he would not be; and to actions which he would not doe; and therefore as *Shimei*, when he was confined, he leapt over the hedg, comes over the pale, after profit and pleasure, and dyes for it; the law given to him he reckoneth as a prison; therefore examine whether there be in thee such a constant inclination to walke in the wayes of godlinesse, so as you could even be a law to your selves, if you are left to what the LORD hath wrought in you.

- 4 They differ in the power that accompanies this law of the mind in a regenerate man: where this Law of grace is; there is not onely a knowledge of what should be done, but also there is a power goes with

with it. This Law is a Kingdome. A government consists *not in word, but in power*, 1 Cor. 4. 20. 1 Iohn 3. 9. *hee that is borne of God sinnes not, neither can hee sinne, &c.* compared with that, 1 Iohn 12. *who is borne, not of the will of the flesh, &c. but of the will of God.* The meaning of both compared is this; a regenerate man that is borne of God, hath first such a habit as is agreeable to the will of God in all things; and this habite is as a thing innate, like naturall qualities bried and borne with us, *so that he cannot sinne*; that is, he cannot but resist and strive against it, and have in the end the victory over it; for it is a law within him which puts him on to what God wills: and secondly, not onely so, but he is borne thus, said the Apostle, that is, though *this disposition* be infused, yet it is so rivetted into him, that he can no more shake it off then a naturall disposition he is borne with; therefore he cannot sin, that is, it cannot be he should become a sinner given up to sin. On the contrary, naturall men wanting this law are not, nor cannot be subject to the Law of God, because this disposition to sin is naturall to him, he is borne of the flesh, of the will of man; so as this Law of grace workes out all evill in the end, and if good be to be done, breakes through all difficulties; but corruption in the other workes out all good, and returnes to sinne, so as he says, I am not able to keepe the Sabbath thus, and abstaine from such and such a sin, I am so strongly inclined to it.

5 Difference is out of the seventh verse, not I, but sinne, and in the last verse, with my mind I serve
P 3 the

the Law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin. This law of the mind makes a change in the person. Can any unregenerate man in the world say, it is not I, but sin? if he doth any thing that is good, it is not he; if he doth any thing that is evill, it is hee and onely he that doth it. A regenerate man himselfe never sins, that is, whilest he is himselfe, he never yields to sinne, but it is his flesh when he is not himselfe, and an unregenerate man when hee is himselfe, never yields fully to the motions of grace; but a regenerate man, when ever he is himselfe, acts according to this part, he is never otherwise overcome, but with a strong temptation, drunke and transported with passion, and when a myst is before his eyes; *I alwayes serve in my mind the Law of God.* And therefore though he be overcome, yet with this difference, that he lookes upon it, as a captivity and a bondage worse then that of *Agypt*. He doth not as that servant in the Law, he is not willing to have his eare boared through, and to serve that master for ever: whereas another lookes at sin as a liberty, and the law of God as a restraint, and wisheth it were not, though he may accommodate himselfe by it; and though he may delight in sin for a while, yet withall he delights in the Law in the inward man, and that is the more constant prevailing overcoming delight: so as consider if there bee not another delight contrary to the delighting in sinne, though at that time, when the flesh delights in sin, it appeares not, which yet overcomes and outweares the other.

3

3 Rule is, consider the manner of thy resisting
and

and fighting against sinne ; and here there are foure notable differences comes to bee laid open.

I

The upright in heart fights against sin with the whole frame of his heart. All the faculties fight in their courses, as it is said, *the Starres did against Sisera*, as first the mind, there is a *μεταβολα*, a change of mind in him : he hath another opinion of his sin. There is a change in Iudgement, he is renewed in his mind. Let a mans opinion be kept right, and how ever his passions may stirre, they will in the end vanish. Whilest a man is unregenerate, he is as *Colos. 1. 21.* *ἐχθρὸς τῇ διαβολῇ*, an enemy in his thoughts or reasonings, as the word translated in *their mindes* properly signifies ; but you hath bee reconciled ; and so after conversion a man is a friend in his understanding to the ways of God, he is in his judgement reconciled to them, and become therein an enemy to the ways of sin. The question here is not, whether thou thinkest sin evill or no, or this and that unlawfull, but whether *evill to thee, pro hic & nunc, at this and that time*, in these and these circumstances ; and then comes in conscience also, and that fights against sin, which is tender and feareth alwayes. *Prov. 28. 14.* Whereas *hee that hardeneth his heart falls into mischief*, and it is that place of conscience is it which is onely capable of this hardnesse and tendernesse. He dares as well venter upon a Canons mouth as commit a sin ; and though he may sometimes be transported for a time, yet conscience fights against it. Then for the will, that fights against sin also, whilst with *David* he hath *sworne to keepe those righteous Iudgements*, that is, hath fixedly

resolved against it. Lastly, he resists sin in his affections, 2 Cor. 12. S. Paul prayed, and prayed earnestly, and could not be content nor take a deniall, he was so troubled. So in David, Psal. 119. 20. *My soule breaketh for the longing it hath to thy Iudgements.* When a man *hungers and thirsts after righteousness*, and weepes bitterly for sin, as Peter did, it is a signe that his affections are stirred. Now on the contrary, in an evill man, all the faculties fight in their courses for sin. As Ephes. 4. 18, 19. *Having their understandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardnesse of their heart: who being past feeling have given themselves over to worke all uncleannesse wth greedinesse:* here you may see all the foure faculties in an ungodly man fighting for sinne.

1 Their cogitations are darkened, &c. their understandings are for sinne, being estranged from the wayes of God.

2 Then secondly followes the conscience, *because of the the hardnesse of their heart*, so the word signifies, their conscience being insensible of sin admits it.

3 And then thirdly, for the evill, *they have given themselves up to it*, they have taken to themselves a resolution to betray their soules to it.

4 Then fourthly, for the affections, they are said *to commit it with greedinesse, that is, with a* *πλεονεξία* of affections, such as is in a covetous man, who is greedy, and can never have enough, his affections are so large.

This

This is the first difference in regard of the subject.

The second difference is in respect of the object, the things they fight against; a carnall man against grosse evils: as we see in *Herod*, when he beheaded *Iohn*, what a contention was there in him: he was troubled about what report the people would give of it, and about the murder of one, he knew to be so holy and good a man: but a man truly regenerate, as he is enabled to see more than another, so also he fights against more. Another man sees no more but the morall evill and good, and so fights against no more; but besides this, a regenerate man sees the spirituall holinesse that is in a duty, and lookes to the manner, as well as the matter, and he fights against those smaller mores in the Sunne. All the carnall men in the world find fault with strictnesse, &c. but another mans chiefe trouble is, that he cannot be strict enough. *S. Paul* was a learned man, and understood the Law of *Moses* exactly, and was not ignorant of the ten Commandements, and yet when he came to be regenerate, he saw and understood it in another manner. *I was alive once without the Law; but when the Commandement came, sin revived, and appeared, as a monster, which before seemed but a small thing to him, above measure sinfull; so for good, when a man is changed in his mind, he discernes the whole will of God, that perfect will, Rom. 12. 2. before, he saw the maine duties it may be, and the grosser evils onely.*

This is a second difference in the Object.

The

202262

The third difference is in the successe ; the issue of a carnall mans resistance is still *deteriora sequor* ; the godly in the issue still followes the best, and in the end is a conqueror ; and though much assaulted, yet he walkes *after the Spirit*, *Rom. 8. 1.* and in the end *mortifies the deeds of the flesh* : but a wicked man, though he may have many good intentions, yet *walkes* as it is *Ephes. 4. 17.* *after the vanity of his mind*, and in the end fulfillls *the lusts of the flesh*. This is Saint *Paul* his estate being compared in the seventh to the *Romans*, with *2 Cor. 12.* though he complaines much in both, yet *Grace sufficient* was given him to keepe him from the *Act*.

Object. But some of Gods children have had the worst in the issue of the combat, as *David* who fell into Adultery, Saint *Peter* into deniall of his Master.

Answ. In some particular actions, they may be foiled, but the combat is with the lust, which in the end is overcome, though the actions give him a blow. Saint *Peters* lust was feare, which made him to deny his Master, but in the end it was overcome, *Acts 4. 8.* where by his boldnesse it appeares there. So *David* had the victory over that lust, *Psal. 51.* how doth he hate it ? and was fenced against it ?

4 Difference is in respect of the continuance of the combat. In the wicked it lasts but for a time, because that in him which causeth this combat, hath no bottome ; like a flower, though beautifull, yet it growes but upon a stalke of grasse, and therefore soone withers : and the combatants failing, the combat ends. *Saul* held out a while, and carried it faire,

faire, but in the end persecuted *David*, and followed his lusts without any bridle. *Indas* was long restrained and kept himselfe in *CHRIST*s family, but at last his covetousnesse overcame him, and he resolves to give up his Master to the Pharisees. *Ioash* restrained himselfe the greatest part of his life, whilst his Vncle lived; but two yeares before his death, he gave himselfe up to doe evill; *the Princes came and did reverence to him*, and hee yielded. So *Amaziah* after he had overcome the *Edomites*.

In a regenerate man the combatants always continue; it is an immortall seed which cannot be eradicated: therefore the combate lasteth and increaseth. There was a strife of feare in *Nicodemus*, and he comes by night, but he got the mastery and spake boldly for *CHRIST*. And so againe we see it in *Peter*: there was a combate in him to his death, as appeares by that which *CHRIST* tells him, *they shall carry thee whither thou wouldest not*; this was a strife in him which never ended, till hee had an end himselfe in this world.

Thus you have seene the differences betweene the relapses of the godly and the wicked, by which examine yourselves.

If no promise belongs to any but to those that turne; then this follows, that if any have provoked the eyes of *GOD*s glory by any sinne, let him not thinke to take up the matter by offering sacrifice, that is, by prayers, and confessions; for *GOD* requires this absolutely, *Except yee turne, I will not be mercifull*, do what you will, humble your selves, fast, pray, seeke my face, &c. *GOD* will be satisfied with

Vse 2.

202262

with nothing, unlesse there be a reall turning. Therefore let no man say, *I have sinned, and I am sorry, and confesse it &c. but I am not able to leave it, and yet I hope God will pardon mee.* No, know that stoppage is no payment. God requires all this, humiliation, and these purposes, and an act of turning beside. All is lost labour, unlesse there bee a divorce made from your sinnes. Well therefore might *Daniel* say to *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Breake off thy sinnes by righteousness, and thine iniquity by shewing mercy to the poore.* *Daniel* 4. 27. *Daniel* doth not exhort *Nebuchadnezzar*, to prayer only, &c. (though this is likewise to be done) but *to breake off his sinnes by righteousness*; that is, whereas he was an oppressor, now hee must give almes and take off their burthens, that is, take the contrary course: This is the counsell God gives to *Ioshua*, *Ioshua* 7. 8. when hee was humbling himselfe and praying, *Get thee up, take away the accursed thing from among you, &c.* that is, this is not the way, to fast, (though this is to be done too) that which I most looke after, is taking away the evill that hath provoked me. Though this be a truth acknowledged, yet looke into mens hearts, there is a false conceit lurking there, that hearing the word, receiving the Sacrament, &c. is enough to save them. Men would thinke their estates absolutely bad, if they should performe none of these duties, and wholly neglect them: but if they come to Church, give some almes, &c. then they thinke that all is well. But know, that except you actually turne from all evil wayes, all these performances are in vaine.

And

And to convince you of this, consider, that the end of the word, conference, and Sacraments is to turne you from your evill wayes : therefore God accepts them no further then they have this effect, *Thou shalt keepe my ordinances and statutes, that thou mayest walke in my wayes, to feare me, saith the Lord :* that is the end of all ordinances and statutes ; so that though there be never so much done, yet except your lusts be mortified, and victory got over those sins which are most connatural to you, all is lost. Againe consider, that those duties in which you trust (as we are all apt so to do,) as reading good Bookes, confessing thy sinnes, if they be rightly performed, they will worke a true change ; and if they doe not, it is a signe they are but carcases not accepted ; without this fruit what are they, but bodily exercises (though happily performed, with some intention of minde) because they profit nothing ? *1 Tim. 4. 8.* for the Apostle calls that, *Bodily exercise, which profiteth little,* therefore *Rom. 2. ult.* there is a distinction put betwixt *a Jew in spirit, and in the letter :* and so betweene a right and a false performance of the duties of the Law ; the one in the letter, the other in the spirit : the one respects the outward part of the duty only, the other the inward ; and if they be not inward in the spirit, and so thereby effectually to worke a generall change both in their hearts and lives, *their praise may be of men,* that is, you your selves and others may thinke you good Christians, but *their praise is not of God,* saith the Apostle, we are all *Gods husbandry,* the Ministers dressers of it, the ordinances are the manuring of it. Now what is the
end

202262

end of all husbandry? is it not fruit? is it enough for the trees to say, we have submitted our selves to all manuring, watering, &c. but we are still as barren, or our fruit, as bad as before? *Mal. 3. 2.*

The end of Christs comming is made to be as a refiner, to scoure out staines; which place being compared with that of the first of *Esay* where God sayes, *He abhorred their new moones and sacrifices, because their silver was become drosse*; both afford this, that the end of Christs comming, being to purge out this drosse, therefore if this be not done, all performances, new Moones, Sacrifices, &c. are in vaine. Conclude therefore that except there be an universall change, both of the object, from evill to all good, and of the subject in all the faculties, except this be wrought in you, you shall surely die for it; the LORD will not forgive you, or heare in heaven when you cry, though you shed never so many false teares.

3

If this be the condition, upon which mercy is suspended, this also followes, that good purposes and intentions will not serve the turne: not but that these must be precedent to every mans turning; and when they are true, they doe bring forth this effect of turning from all evill wayes whatsoever. But as there is a purpose which is true and the ground of sincerity, so there are false ones also; the true alwayes continues and brings forth constant endeavours and fruits, but the other leaves us where it findes us, and quickly dies and withers. There is so much in a carnall man as may breed good purposes, and desires and resolutions; *viz.* naturall

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conscience, and desires of preservation and salvation, which two put together worke serious purposes; but this bring all but flesh still, is not able to worke so through a change; as we see in moorish ground and in a rotten fenny soyle, that it brings forth broad long grasse, which soone withers and decays, neither is it sweet nor usefull: So is it with conscience enlightned to see a mans duty, and selfe-love, they produce good purposes, and in shew great and serious, but yet such as the people there expressed, *Deut. 5. 29.* who purposed to keepe the Law: but *Ob* saith God, *that there were an heart to feare mee!* as if he had said, the soyle, the ground is not good for these purposes to grow in; therfore they will surely wither, there wants a heart changed to afford roote to them, and to nourish them.

The next point is gathered from the order of the words, *turning from our evill wayes* being put last of all these foure conditions, because all the other doe but make way for this. All the other, prayer and humiliation, are but preparatives to this. As the end of all dressing and pruning of trees is the fruit, and the end of plowing and sowing is the bringing forth of corne, so the end of all other duties is turning from our evill wayes, and the end is alwayes hardest, *omnis difficultas in ipsa summitate* in the utmost pitch and top of the hill; this being the utmost of all the other, is therefore the hardest: Therefore the Prophets urge this upon all occasions; *if you turne, cease to do evill, rend your hearts, then will I leave a blessing behind mee.* In that this is the pin upon which all hangs and is suspended; observe thence,
That

202262

Doct.

That it is a very difficult thing, to turne from a mans evill wayes.

That this is the difficultest dutie of all else, we see plaine in the *Israelites*. The *Jewes* religion was very costly, they being to kill so many Sacrifices, to keepe so many Feasts, yet they were content to doe all this, but not to turne; they would not be brought to it, when yet to any thing else. Whence appeares this difficultie of it: their readinesse to offer sacrifice was always acknowledged by God, when their backwardnesse to this was still complained of. Againe, we see it in experience. Let a man who hath an evill and a wicked heart, let him be broken in a Morter; lay affliction on affliction, let him bee brought to deaths doore, yet all this will not change him; nay let God worke miracles, not only in his sight, but upon him, yet all is not enough to turne him. As wee see in *Ieroboam*, there was a miracle wrought upon him, though he had his hand withered up, and was by the Prophet reprov'd; and his Kingdome was threatned to bee taken away from him, yet this would not worke upon him, he would not turne from his evill ways: he found such sweetnesse in that evill way, whereby he kept his Kingdome, and without which he thought he could not hold it, if he left that. So all the great wonders in *Egypt* would not soften *Pharaoh* his heart, nor make him *let the children of Israel goe*, because he thought it was for his profit to keepe them still. *The grounds of it are:*

Reas. I.

Because these evill wayes are so pleasant to us, so suitable to all men, according as mens severall fancies

fancies do pitch. Now it is a rule in morality, that *those things are most difficult, about which joyes and griefes are conversant*, and therefore the chiefe imployment and end and use of vertue, is to order them and guide them aright.

Because they are rooted in nature, and are agreeable to a mans naturall disposition; and it is hard to stop the current of nature, which way soever it takes, especially running downe the hill: And then besides, education addes to nature; and custome as another nature, addeth strength to sinne; and Sathan addes to all these: For when lusts lie as sparkes under embers, hee blowes them up. And to all these ad the joyning of wicked men, among whom we live, and who live with us in the same courses. Therefore in *Ephes. 2. The course of the world, and the Prince that rules in the children of disobedience*, are made there strong and potent and efficacious workers in us: there is nothing so weake as water, yet let much water bee joyned together, and nothing is stronger; so though sin were weake of it selfe (as yet it is not) yet when multitudes joyne, custome, Sathan, &c. wee are carried with the streame and croud.

Reas. 2.

Because every evill way in us is backt by an inward Law of the members in us, that makes it also hard. *Rom. 7. 23.* where the Apostle considering of the reason, why sinne should so prevaile and leade him captive gives this, *I see layes he, another law in my members rebelling against the law of my minde, &c.* this is given as the reason why hee cannot doe the good hee would, and why he doth the sinne he hates. And the

Reas. 3.

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202262

reason why he had so much to doe with it was, because it was a *law*, and it is called a *law*, the *law* of *sinne*, because it commands powerfully as a *law*. A *law* implies a strong commanding inclination. Lawes extort *obedience*, and will have it done; they come with authority, and will not be denied; and so doth sin; and therefore it is hard to resist it; and so bids good to be done, and a man cannot do it. So 2 Pet. 2. 14. We have it expressed, *eyes full of adultery that cannot cease from sinne*: because as a law, it is armed with punishments and rewards, this being the definition of the law; *Præceptum minus commixtum*, a naked *Præceptum* is not called a law, because it barely teacheth; but when threatnings are joyned with it, then it is called a law, and such lawes are our lusts; if we do resist them, they threaten wth some evill: as when *Ahab* would have *Naboths* Vineyard, his lust being not answered casts him upon his sicke bed, as if it meant to be revenged on him, till it were satisfied: So did *Aman* his lust also: And as it threatneth and punisheth, so it promisseth rewards, profit and pleasure, if we will obey it.

Both which argue the difficulty to resist it.

As also that it is called the law of the members, argues as much: for it is so called,

First, because it inclines not in a morall manner onely, as when a man is perswaded by reason or motives to doe any thing that is evill, but because it inclines us Physically, as nature enclines us to meate and drinke. A law so radicated in the soule, if it inclines by way of nature, as plum-mets

mets hang upon wheeles, and makes them goe as we say, whether they will or no; and reason may be put off and denyed, but not a strong inclination of nature, that will not be got off so easily.

Because it discovers it selfe (though it be seated in the whole man) and is most operative in the sensuall part, as on the contrary the law of the mind is most exercised in the superior part, though it sanctifies the whole man. The meaning is this, it appears in the faculties of the minde, when they are set about any action that is good, and in the relation is called *the law of the members*, because it is discerned in the use of the members, as a man that hath the palsie, it lyes undiscerned in the hand; but when he comes to use it, he finds it; so the gout, or soreness or lameness in the leg, though it be there, yet it is most discerned when a man goes to walke: such a lameness or difficulty in our faculties appears, when we goe about any thing that is good.

In the last place, this *law of the members* is said to rebell against the *law of the mind*; and if we will consider its forces in this warre, we shall find it difficult to resist and turne from them.

For first there is a strong faction of evill; many members, many lusts, legions of lusts warring; so the word implies: it is not a *μονομαχία*, a single fight, but of many; there is never a good motion comes into the soule, but they give their suffrage against it, their voice against whatsoever is good; no good intention but they are ready to gainsay it; nor do they meerely say it, and tell us they dis-

like it, but they will reason it out with many arguments, and they are not able onely to give a voice against what is good, but likewise to doe something what is active. They dampe, and clogge and prohibite the spirit, when it is about any good; and therefore it is called flesh, because the nature of it is to dampen the spirit; as in the doings and proceedings of men, there often comes a prohibition from Chauncery to stay the proceedings at the Common law; so from the law of the members comes a prohibition often hindring us when we would pray and conferre, &c. As it is our part in warre to stop passages, to take up the bridges, to hinder the enemy from going whither they would, so do they fight against us in our endeavours to do good.

So *Galatians* 5. 17. the flesh so lusts against the spirit, that yee cannot doe what you would; and it not onely stoppes from good, but impells to what is evill; it not onely makes defensive warre to hold its owne, but labours to gaine ground and fight, as fire fights with water, labouring to overcome grace, where it is begun, and to assimilate it to it selfe.

And lastly, they are able alwayes to make warre; though the victory bee gotten to day, yet lusts are ready to set on us to morrow. A lust which you thought you should never have heard of more, sets on you afresh: and though you stay all the motions and assaults the flesh puts upon you this day; yet there is such a brood, such

a spring, that to morrow there will be new ones will *instaurare aciem*, and make a new supply; it is still recovering strength and setting up afresh.

All which considered, it appeares to be most difficult for unregenerate men to begin to turne; or for regenerate men to get any ground of their evill wayes.

If to turne from our evill wayes, and to resist the law of the members be so difficult; then learne to proportion your labour to the worke; else the businesse will not be effected. If much labour be required, and little bestowed; then that which is bestowed, will be lost.

Thinke therefore with your selves, that if you have taken none or small paines, the worke is not yet done. If any man have thought it an easie work, let that be enough to convince him that the worke is not yet wrought. The blunter the tooles is, the more strength must be put to it: many stay yet in their sins, because they have undervalued the difficulty of this worke, and have thought lesse paines would have serv'd the turne. Is it easie to change and turne the course of nature? see it by experience; if a man have a naturall inclination, though it may be lesse stirring sometimes then other, yet it will returne againe and againe; and if thou usest not as much forces against it, as it brings with it, thou dost nothing to resist it. If one come against you with ten thousand, and you meet him but with two thousand, who is like to get the victory? Thou must not therefore spare any paines. *Difficilia qua pulchra*: this is the most excellent thing, and there-

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202262

therefore the most difficult. Is it easie to build a Temple to the Lord, and to keep it cleane and in repaire? see what paines Saint *Paul* tooke, *1 Cor. 9.* the three last verses, *Every man that striveth, is temperate in all things; therefore I keepe under my body, and doe bring it into subjection*: he expressed it by what they did at the *Olympian games*, who were at great paines and labours before to enable themselves unto those exercises.

To bring it to particulars.

Is it not a hard thing to keepe watch and ward day and night against a spirituall enemy, to keepe up the bankes, against the Sea of lusts continually assaulding, and breaking in; to take up and to beare the daily crosse without stooping, to carry the cup of prosperity without spilling, to climbe the hill of good duties without fainting, to abstaine from the waters of pleasure, when we are most thirsty, and they at hand, to goe against the crowd without sweating, to be as an Owle amongst men, and to beare the shame (as it is said of Christ) who went out and suffered without the gate, he bare the reproach; and to doe all this continually? These are no easie things, and yet they must be done; men in this case are like unthrifts, who complaine of poverty, and that they cannot thrive, and yet will take no paines. The sluggard will not pull his hand out of his bosome; and men are sluggards in matters of salvation. But to quicken you, consider that this is the maine businesse you came into the world to doe. And doe you thinke that a little cast time spent upon it will be enough? *Math. 11.*

13. It is said, *the Kingdome of Heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force*, that is, he that would have the Kingdome of heaven must use violence to take it ; violence must be offered to your appetites and unruly affections : he must keep them under, and that *by violence*; and againe he must use *violence* in his prayers, and other holy duties, that is, he must wrestle and strive in them, and be fervent in them. There are some good duties to be done as it were *with violence*. Christ in that place shewes, that when the preaching of the Gospell came, and the beauty of the Kingdome came to be opened to men, then they tooke it *by violence*. But who is so ravished now with those priviledges, the hope of their calling, &c. that they should thus take it *with violence*, that is, spare no paines ? Therefore stirre up your selves, and consider what it will cost you. This concernes eventhose that professe the feare of *the Lord*. Looke what anger and passion they have been subject to, they are subject to still ; looke what slackenesse they used in prayer, the same they use still ; their ancient infirmities hang upon them still ; they are found in the same path : the reason is, because they thinke a godly course an easie thing ; therefore have they taken but small paines to be freed from the bondage of their lusts, and to grow in grace. So also those without are not content to be at the cost and labour to begin to repent, but think it may be spared, it will be at any time soone done. But know beloved, it is not so. Take a man accustomed to idlenesse, is it easie for him to become laborious

and diligent in his calling? so if there be any ill haunt, how hard is it to hinder a man from going still downe the hill, to pull his feete out of the pit of uncleannesse, sweete gaine, or gaming, &c.

Quest

But you will say, what is the labour we must take? *turne from our evill wayes?*

Answ.

'Directions might soone be given. If there be any edge set on your desires, if you were once resolved, even that resolution is one meanes to overcome your evill wayes: but to helpe you, take these.

Rule 1.

To such as are strangers from the covenant, for to those I first speake: when thou art given to evill wayes, go not about first a reformation in particular, but endeavour to get a general change wrought. It is a rule in Physicke, that when a man hath a particular infirmity, the way to cure it, is first to bring the whole body into a good frame and temper, and that will worke out the disease: so get the utmost end altered. Therefore humble your selves, and seek Gods face, and leave not till some assurance of Gods favour be gotten, till a new Lord be set up in your hearts, a new end; till the end be changed, no good can be done. Therefore it is in vaine to go about the particulars first. The utmost end is as the Rudder to the ship, as the bridle to the horse, which turnes all; going about particulars only, is as if one should set his shoulder to the side of the ship, when one touch of the Rudder would doe it. Therefore *Rehoboam 2 Chron. 10. 14.* erred, because his heart was not prepared to seeke the Lord; and his

his failing in that particular is ascribed to his want in the generall. *Iob 17. 9.* It is said, *the righteous shall hold on his way, and hee that is of pure hands shall waxe stronger and stronger* : he that hath his heart once changed, holds on ; but till that is done, all is in vaine to strive with particulars. As put the case a Gardener takes paines to dresse a Thorne ; it may have as much paines taken with it, in manuring and pruning it, as any plant in the garden ; yet it remaines a Thorne still, for all the mouldes put to it ; So though thou prayest and fastest, and humblest thy selfe, yet if thy nature bee not changed, all will doe no good. Cast up a stone a thousand times, it comes downe againe, because it remaines a stone ; but if it were turned into a meteor, &c. or the like, it would not. Therefore get a generall change of thy heart, and then a change in particular would follow.

Goe to **C H R I S T** and beseech him to worke this change in thee, let this be more in your practise. This wee formally confesse, that the **L O R D** only can change us, yet it is not thoroughly considered. When thy nature is strongly inclined to any evill way, so as thou art almost out of hope to overcome, yet goe to **G O D**. That place may encourage us, *Iames 4. 5, 6.* doe you thinke the Scripture sayes in vaine, *The spirit that is in us lusteth after envie ? but he giveth more grace* : hee had told them *vers. 1.* of *lusts fighting in their members* ; they might aske him how they should get the victory : true saith the Apostle, it is hard to overcome, and indeed impossible

Rule 2.

202262

to nature, *the spirit that is in us lusts after envie*, and will doe so: But consider, the Scripture offers more grace than nature is able to doe, it tells you not in vaine, that the grace therein offered is able to heale; though the disease be hereditary, and is past natures cure, yet it is not past the cure of grace, *Acts 10. 31.* It is said of CHRIST, *Him hath God raised up to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sinnes.* When lusts are too strong for a man, Christ comes as a Prince and overcomes them, for he gives repentance; and the end of his coming was not onely to give salvation, but repentance. Though Physitians could not cure *Naaman*, the Prophet could, though the Disciples could not cast out Divells, yet Christ could: And therefore say not, it is an hereditary lust, and it hung long upon me, and I have made many resolutions, and yet I cannot overcome it.

Take a man that is borne blinde, hee is past all cure by man, all Physitians will give him over, and say, *he is borne blind*; yet remember that Christ did cure those that were borne blinde and lame. This course *Paul* tooke *2 Cor. 1. 2.* he had a strange lust which hee could not overcome, he beseecheth the Lord to remove, *for this I besought the Lord thrise, that it might depart*, so *David* also, *Psal. 51. 10.* finding the remainder of his old disease and sinfull dispositions, he goes to God for a new heart; when he could not make cleane his heart, he prayes to the Lord, *Create a cleane heart in me.* So he in the Gospel, *I beseech thee helpe my unbelieve.* Thinke not that all is done, when thou hast taken up a resoluti-

on against thy sinne : to take up a resolution, belongs to thee, but to cure it belongs alone to God : Go to him therefore, for he hath undertaken to *circumcise thy heart.* Ephes. 3. he having prayed v. 16. *that they should be strengthened in the inward man, &c.* then vers. 20. concludes, *Now to him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all wee are able to aske or thinke, according to the power that worketh in us, &c.* as if he had said, you may finde many weakneses in your selves, and then doe as I doe for you, goe to the Lord to heale them, and know that he is able to doe above all thou canst thinke, to subdue that lust which thou thoughtest could never have beene overcome.

But how will he do it? *According to that mighty power that worketh in us*; that power is as strong as Christ himselfe, for it is the power of his death, the power that raised him up from death to glory, able to worke out all infirmities, and to worke into you all the graces you want. Give not over therefore, have faith in the promises of *Sanctification*, as well as in those of *Iustification*. Is he not bound by promise to performe these to you that believe, as well as the other? Where ever God hath a mouth to speake, faith hath an eare to heare, an hand to lay hold, as God said to *Ioshua*, I will conquer those Gyants for thee, I will pull downe those walls which they say are built up to heaven; onely bee thou couragious, and doe but trust mee, bee not discouraged upon any occasion, give not over saying, it is a thing will never be done, and had not *Ioshua* trusted the Lord, hee would quickly have set
downe

downe and given over. So I say to you concerning your lusts; bee courageous; and so none are but those that put their confidence in the Lord; faint not, nor be weary; doe but believe thou shalt overcome, and thou shalt see them all conquered in the end. One word of his mouth was enough to still the raging windes, and is as able to still thy lusts.

Object.

But here many will bee ready to object, I have striven long and prayed long, and taken much paines, and I have not gotten the victory; this must necessarily bee answered, for this is the case of many, and it is the scope of *Sathan* to discourage men, and thereby to give over the combat.

Answ.

First consider, whether thy striving be right or no! for there is a false resistance of sinne, and the promise is not made to that; and then no wonder if they be not performed; for example,

1 First it may be it is not the sinne thou strivest against, but the disprofit, the discredit, in thy name and estate, or sicknesse in thy body, that followes upon it, so as if these were removed, thou shouldest be willing enough to keepe the sin. This is not a right striving that will be accepted.

2 It may be, it is but a faint resistance, and a faint denyall doth but make the begger the more importunate. *Balaam* gave the messengers a denyall, but it was a faint one, they perceived his lingring, which made them the more importunate: It may be thou art content still to parly with sinne as *Eva* did, and so by little and little art brought to the committing of it: these faint denyalls are no denyalls, these pid-ling

ling companions are not to be accounted fighters against sin.

3 If thy denyall be more resolute, consider whether it be not for a fit, a flash for a good mood, he is but a cowardly enemy that for one volley of shot will give over, Sathan and our lusts are not of that disposition.

4 Consider whether thy resistance be not only against the grosse act, and not against the least tinctures, the fringes and borders of sin, that doe compass the act. These are of the same kinde with the act, though not of the same degrees: thou resistest it may bee the greater acts, but admittest the lesser, some dalliance with it.

As the drunkard it may be resolves to runne no more into excesse, yet he will sit with his old companions, and be sipping, till sometimes he is overtaken. *Balaam* will goe with them, but *not speake a word but what the Lord shall put in to his mouth.*

The Levite would not stay all day, but yet he would be entreated to stay and eat his break-fast, and so to stay dinner, and so to stay all night. Thus dalliance brings on adultery, and lesser sinnes greater; as a little thiefe let in at a window lets in the greater. If therefore you faile thus in your resistance, the promise is not made to you. Tis true, it is said, *resist the Divell and he will flee from you*; but the resistance must be right, and not such as hath beene spoken, and that is the first answer.

As you may be deceived in your striving against sinne, so also about the victory, and that on both sides: both by thinking you have the victory when you

Answer. 2

202262

you have it not, and (2) by thinking thou hast it not when thou hast it.

First thinking thou hast not the victory when thou hast it ; for example, when thou findest the sinne striven against, bustling and lusting more than at other times, thou therefore concludest, thou hast not nor shalt not get the victory ; when as now sinne is dying and on the losing hand ; (as on the contrary, when thou thinkest all at peace, thou mayest be farthest off the victory.) Consider with thy selfe, doth any man but a regenerate man complaine so bitterly as the Apostle doth, *Rom. 7. the good that I would doe, that I doe not*, or as the same Apostle complains, *2 Corinb. 12. of the thorne in the flesh* ? doe you thinke that any but a sound hearted man, can come as he did with teares to **C H R I S T**, that cryed out so to him, *Lord helpe my unbeliefe* ? can any but a broken heart pray so earnestly as *David, Psal. 51 10. for a new and a cleane heart* ? This deepe sense of sinne, is an argument of our victory over it.

This complaining is a signe that we have the better of it : for what is the reason thou complaineest thus against it, but because thou art striving against it ? We know the mud that lies at the bottome of the water, troubleth not the water ; but when they goe about to cleanse the ditch, then the mud riseth and defiles it ; yet then it is a purging. When one takes a fire-brand to extinguish it, by beating out the fire, yet then it is the sparkes fly most about : When we strive against sinne, we feele it most, partly because Sathan his manner is, to rend and teare, when he is going out, and it is the nature of sin also so to do,

do, as also because our light is encreased, the more grace we have, and the more we strive against it, and therefore we see it more, our sense of sin grows more exquisite.

Againe on the other side thou mayest think thou hast the victory, when thou hast it not. The soare may be skind over, when it is not healed at the bot-tome, and then no wonder, if it breake out againe: Sin may lie but asleepe when thou takest it for dead; therefore in turning from our evill wayes wee must observe a right method. Let thy humiliation bee found, thy faith and assurance perfect: when these precedent acts are not done as they ought, and yet thou thinkest thy sin mortified, it may deceive thee; as wee say an error in the first concoction is never amended in the second, nor of the second in the third: So if thy humiliation hath not beene found, thy turning from thy evil ways cannot be through.

To answer this objection, consider that thou strivest against even a spring of sinne; if it were but to emptie a cisterne or to dry up a pond, when the worke is once done, we should heare of it no more: but it is a spring of sin that runnes continually; and therefore thinke not that because it returnes againe, that thy former striving is in vaine. As those that watch over the pump in a Ship, though they pump out all the water to day, cannot say, that it will bee emptie to morrow, or that yet their pumping is in vaine, because it fills againe, for if they ceased to doe it, it would sinke the Ship; so it is with sinne, especially with some sins: some are more properly called the *Law of the members*, as being rooted in the
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3 *Ans*

20226a

constitution of our bodies, in our naturall dispositions ; and these are ready to returne againe ever and anon.

There is a great difference betweene these, and the temptations of Sathan, temptations (as blasphemous thoughts) are but as weeds throwne into the garden, and cast out againe : but these are as weeds growing in the garden that take roote there : and which though weeded out, will grow againe. We must not hope or thinke to dry cleane up the spring of originall sinne, but the labour returnes upon us in a circle. As in our houses so in our hearts, we sweepe them cleane to day, and againe to morrow ; for then they will be foule againe : therefore mervaile not, if you be kept in continuall labour.

4 Answ.

Againe consider this, that G O D suffers some lusts and infirmities to hang upon you to humble you ; as he dealt with *Paul* : he sent that *thorne in the flesh*, that he might not be exalted above measure, but be kept little in his owne eyes : Though he cures the Ague, yet hee suffers some grudgings to remaine ; that though wee goe in the way of his commandements, yet that wee goe halting, that wee may remember the worke of redemption, and be sensible of his mercy in C H R I S T. Likewise hee suffers such lusts to haunt us, to make us weary of this world, as Saint *Paul*, who therefore *desired to be dissolved and to bee with C H R I S T* ; as also that wee might learne to be mercifull and charitable unto others and to pittie them that have the like infirmities. And therefore though thou fallest, yet give not over striving. It is Satans end to have us discouraged

raged : be importunate with God, and he cannot at length but give thee the victory ; for as Christ saies, *if you aske bread, will he give you a Scorpion ?* if you aske grace, will he give you up to your lusts ? he will not. It is Gods manner to let his children strive, and to overcome in the end. *Jacob wrestled all night till the dawning of the day,* and then he let him have the victory, and blest him. The Lord suffers us to strive long ; but this is our comfort, that we have a promise ; that if we resist the Devill, he shall fly.

And whereas you will say I find it not :

Object.

The meaning of the promise is not, as if *Sathan* should fly away as thou shouldest heare of him no more, or that thy lusts should never returne upon thee againe ; but that if thou wilt be peremptory, thou shalt have the victory in that particular combate. As if when thou hast a feaver, if one comes and tells thee, take such a receipt and thou shalt bee cured ; his meaning is not, that thou shalt so be cured, as never to have Feaver againe, but that thou shalt be healed for the present : so in that particular combate, thou shalt have the victory.

Answ.

Oh ! but I am still haunted, and I doe not overcome :

Object.

Strive constantly and conscionably, and though it doth returne again and again, the Lord takes notice of all thy paines and warring against it : that which he sayes to the Church of *Ephesus*, *Revel. 2. 2.* may be applied to this, *I know thy workes, and thy labour :* though thy corruptions be too strong

Answ.

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202262

for thee ; yet if thou strivest, the **L O R D** takes it for a victory ; thou shalt not be condemned for it : give not over, but rather thinke thus ; if all this contention hath wonne so little ground of my lusts, where should I have beene if I had not contended at all ? and therefore I must take yet more paines, and row harder, that at the last I may overcome.

And because this is of generall use, both to regenerate and unregenerate, therefore I will goe on to adde some more rules and directions, wherein this paines consists which we must take in resisting sinne.

Rule 3.

A third rule or meanes wherein this labour against evill wayes must be bestowed, is to strive to take notice of all the wayes of God, whereby he labours to turne thee from thy evill wayes, and let them not passe without some impression to that purpose for which God intends them. God useth not onely his Word, but many meanes else, to turne men ; as by his workes, and by many passages of providence hee strives with us, all which should be observed. As it may be, some great crosse upon the commission of a sinne, some great dangerous sicknesse, though not to death ; sometimes he sends great feares and terrors of conscience upon some sin committed, sometimes an evill report is brought up of us ; or he sends friends to admonish us, or executes som Iudgement upon another for the like sin in our sight. When he meets with thee some way or other, as he met *Balaam*, he lookes we should understand something by it : and if

if we neglect those his dealings with us, he takes it ill at our hands, and so gives us up to our lusts more and more. *Dan. 5. 22.* there had beene a Iudgement brought upon *Nebuchadnezzar* in the sight of *Belshazzar* his Sonne, which should have beene a meanes to have turned him : but *Thou Belshazzar his Sonne hast not humbled thy selfe, though thou knewest all this.* As if he had said, I did all this to one neare thee in thy sight, that thou mightest be humbled, and turne to me. This was the case of *Ieroboam*, *1 Kings 13.* God sent the Prophet to him with signes and wonders, both in tearing the Altar and withering his hand, yet still he went on. And verse 23. it is noted and set downe on purpose by the Holy Ghost, that *after this Ieroboam returned not from his evill way, &c.* as if God had said, I looked thou should'st have returned upon the sight of all these Iudgements, but thou wouldest not. So *Iere. 3. 8.* you know that *Israel* was carried captive long before *Iudah.* *I gave Israel a bill of divorcement for her adultery : yet treacherous Iudah feared not ;* as if he had said, a Iudgement on their next neighbour should have made them to have returned. Therefore doe thou think, what *the Lord* would by all such passages of providence towards thee, which are all as warning peeces before the great army, as crackes before the fall, crevses through which the Lord reveales himselfe : For you must know, that God brings men in by his workes as well as by his word ; and you may take his workes in vaine as well as his word, and to let them passe without profit is to

take his Name in vaine, for his Name is whatsoever he makes himselfe knowne by : as by these acts he doth, and *God will not hold him guiltlesse that takes his Name in vaine.* God will utterly destroy such a man, for then there is no remedy. God cuts not his owne corne till they be ripe, and all his dealings with them tend to ripen them; nor doth he bring wicked men to destruction till they be ripe for it, and every such passage doth ripen them. Now all men are for the most part in one of these three conditions : Some take no notice at all of such passages. God passeth by them, and is not seene ; as it is said of *the Israelites, Deut. 29.* though they had seene great signes and miracles in the wilderness, verse 3. yet they had not eyes to see them, nor eares to hear them, verse 4. Others though they doe take notice of them, yet the impression they leave behinde them, is but slight, and like a light colour not well dyed, the tincture is soone worne out, *Marke. 6. 52. for they considered not the miracle of the loaves, for the hardnesse of their hearts.* It was spoken upon occasion of their being amazed at this new miracle, Christs walking upon the water, and is as if he had said, *if yee had considered the miracle of the loaves, you would not have wondered thus at my walking on the waters :* that had made so deepe an impression on them, as it should by reason of the hardnesse of their hearts. But you shall see the case quite otherwise in the *Taylor* ; his affrightment which *the earthquake and the opening of the prison doores* had wrought in him, passed not away as a dreame, but left such an impression

pression as brought him home. And so should all such passages worke with us : And that is the third direction.

4 Rule is not simply to goe about to resist the sin, and to turne from the evil of our ways, but to fill the heart with something that is better ; for when lusts are mortified, the stream of our affections are not dried up, but diverted ; and therefore the way is not to goe about to stop the current of a sinfull lust, but to turne thy heart into another channell, set thy heart upon something that is better : Take a crab-tree stocke that is sower or bitter, the onely way to sweeten it, is to put in a graft of another nature, which will change it, and by little and little sweeten the constitution of it.

Rule 4.

But you will say, what is to be put in ?

I answer, goe not about it as a morall man, but as a Christian, get Iustification and Sanctification. It is true, it is profitable to bee much humbled for thy sinne, and you ought to be so ; yet this is not the onely way to heale it, but the heart must be strengthened with the assurance of the forgivenesse of it.

There is a double way to get the heart turned away from sinne, the one to see the loathsomnesse of that which we turne from, the other the beauty of the contrary object wee turne to. Spend not all your paines about the first, but doe something in the later ; the more contrition, the better. But it is not got all at once, it is more increased by assurance and hope of pardon, when a man begins to have hope, hee purifies himselfe. So it is in all other exercises

les; it is hope quickens our endeavours. One that is not neare a kingdome, goes not about it: but when he comes to have hopes, he begins to bestirre himselfe, *tolle spem, & tolle conatum*, therefore get and encrease the hope of the pardon of your finnes. Hence the Apostle, *Rom. 15. 13.* prayes, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, through believing &c.* By the words following, it appeares to bee to strengthen and set them right concerning all their infirmities: and he points to this as one meanes, *to be filled with joy and peace in believing*; as if hee had said, if your hearts were full of spirituall joy, through faith and assurance, your hearts would bee purified, and therefore *faith* also is said *to purifie the heart*; and besides, when the blood of Christ is applyed by faith, there goes a vertue with it. *Heb. 9. 14.* How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternall spirit offered up himselfe to God, purge your consciences from dead workes? And adde to this *sanctification*, set upon that worke. *Iob. 17.* Christ hath prayed, that they might be preserved from the evill of the world.

But how shal that be done? *Sanctifie them through thy truth, thy word is truth*, that is, when they shall passe through this world full of evill and corruption, the way to preserve them spoilelesse and untainted is, to have the heart sanctified. When the heart is well oyled with grace, the dirt of the world falls off. This is an antidote against corruption. Though in your passage, you meete with much bad ayre and infection, this will preserve you. But then how should wee bee sanctified? *By truth*: The more truth.

truth you get into' your hearts, the more grace. *Grace* and *truth* goes together, 1 *loh.* and came by *CHRIST*, who is full of both. Therefore 2 *Pet.* 3. ult. these two are joyned, *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of Christ.* By *truth*: but what truth? *thy word is truth.* Every truth is not fit to sanctifie, as all water will not take sope to scower, the word is that truth that doth it. *Morall truths* may doe many things in the soule, they may adorne it, but they cannot heale or purifie it. *Wash in Iordan*, saith the Prophet to leproous *Naaman*. There is a speciall vertue in this *Iordan* to heale thee of thy leprosie, that is not in the waters of *Damascus*. You came not to the word as to a lecture of *Philosophy*, but as to that which workes wonders: the power of God goes wth it. For withal marke this, that it is not the word of it selfe that doth it; it doth not worke as *Physicke* that hath a vertue in it of its owne, but the *L O R D* doth it by the word; and therefore Christ prayes to his father *to sanctifie them by the word.* As a man writes a letter by a pen, so the Lord sanctifies by the word. To consecrate the heart to *G O D* is to sanctifie it; and divine truths alone doe consecrate the heart to *G O D*, and no other. Let us therefore get much grace and truth into our hearts, assurance of *justification* and *joy in the Holy Ghost*, that by tasting of better the heart may be taken off from the pleasures of sinfull wayes; sound joy will swallow up all other joyes, the joys of sinne.

Stirre up those graces that are in thee: for when wee exhort you to goe to God to helpe you, our meaning is not, that you should leave all the worke:

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Rule 5.

202262

some labour is required of thee. I speake to those who have some beginnings of grace: you must stir up those graces *G O D* hath given you. Hence Saint *Paul* sayes, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* neglect not the gift that was given thee, as if he had said, *Timothy*, thou maist doe much, if thou consider what ability thou hast received; so much spirit; so much liberty; so much regeneration, so much free will to good. So he sayes to the Church of *Philadelphia*, *Thou hast a little strength*, it is a Talent, therefore use it. Therefore also he sayes in *Jude 20.* *build up your selves, and cleanse your selves*, and many the like.

Object.

But you will say, how can wee doe this, seeing it is the *L O R D* that *workes in us the will and the deed*, and wee can doe nothing without the Spirit?

Answ.

Though the Spirit doth it, yet we, in this worke are to be agents also, *Rom. 8. 13.* *If you through the Spirit mortifie the deeds of the flesh*; as if he had said, though you do it by the Spirit, yet do you go about it. We may do something to draw the Spirit nigher us; as we may do something to grieve the Spirit, and to smoke him out of the house, so to please the Spirit; as we intend the flame of the Spirit by pure thoughts, so we put him out by foggy thoughts.

Quest.

But you will aske, what it is to stirre up our graces?

Anf. 1.

Stirre up thy light, examine thy selfe of thy evill wayes, endeavour to see them clearly, and confesse them, for that is the way to forsake them, *Prov. 28.*

13. and

13. and despise none of them : with that light thou hast, examine every thing what ever thou hast, the least doubt, search it out to the full. This idle speech, this jollity and vanity of conversation how little soever it seemes, as dalliance in thy thoughts and eyes, overly performance of duties.

Vse that light further to get reason against thy sinne. This is to consider a mans wayes as *David* did, to ponder the reasons. Let a man take paines with his heart from day to day, and consider what reasons there are by which a mans heart may be taken off from his sin: as against unlawfull gaine, to thinke it but as stealing custome, whereby a man forfeits all the rest ; that what is unlawfully gotten, is as the coale that was carried in by the Eagle into her nest with a peece of broyled flesh, which consumed her nest, young, and her selfe ; and all treaties of infirmities, that what is unlawfully gotten is as a coale carried in by the Eagle into her nest, and the flesh among the rest to consume all and thy nest. Had not *Ahab* better have beene without his Vineyard ? if pleasure ; consider how it is but for a season, and what bitterness it will bring in the end, and lose the joy which by farre exceeds it: if matter of vaine-glory, that all thy paines taken is lost, for it will bee all thy reward.

When thou hast done this, adde a third, namely, exercise, to overcome it : as Saint *Paul* sayes to *Timothy*, exercise thy selfe to godlinesse. Thinke of these things, *1 Tim. 4. 15.* if thy failing be in good, accustome thy selfe to the duty ; if in bad, disuse

202262

disuse it, and that will exceedingly helpe thee. A Child that could not want the teat for an houre or two, yet being disused and weaned a while, seeks not after it : and doe this against your bosome sin; that sin that hangs on thee more then the rest, single out, and do thus to it, as *David, Psal. 18. kept himselfe from his iniquity.*

Rule 6.

Lastly, observe the manner of their growing upon you, and how they fight for themselves. The lusts that are in us are warring lusts, as I told you out of *Rom. 7.* and so Saint *James* tells us: and so in Saint *Peter*, they have a method in fighting, which observing, you may learne to resist and prevent them.

1

Observe, when any affection goes beyond the bounds Christ hath set it, that then it begins to warre and rebell, even as subjects doe; when they breake their Soveraignes lawes, they begin to rebell: so when *Rachell* would needs have children, and nothing would content her else, it was a warring lust.

2

Observe the manner how they fight for themselves: the wiles they have in warring: they endeavour to possesse the ports, the senses, suffering no good if they can to be brought in, that may oppose them, and drawing in by them what may feed and strengthen them, such objects as may give supply. For when the heart within is full of adultery; they eyes is so also. They take also away the supply from the contrary side, causing us to neglect prayer and reading, and such holy duties, as the *Philistims* disarmed the *Israelites*, and would let them have no Smith.

They

They draw men out with traines from their forts, till they have led them into an Ambush, as *Ioshua drew the men of Ai from their Towne*, and as the fishers drive the fishes out of their corners, where they are safe, and when they are wandring in the river, take them in their nets; so do lusts draw out from the rocke of our salvation, from our resolutions, the ordinances, and our callings, and then surprize us. They leade us into ambush by little and little; As *Peter* was drawne to deny his Master by degrees. They will also come upon us at first, but with light skirmishes. Lust commeth not upon us with inticement and onsets, to great sins at first: and we making account of little, and so being negligent, it comes upon us with the maine battaile. *David* lookes but upon *Bathsheba* at first, and then is drawne to speech with her, and thento folly. Therefore observe this, that you may be skilfull in warre, as the Athenians by reason of their neighbour enemies; and having observed this to be their manner to deale thus subtilly, as *Saul* said of *David*, looke about thee, and take Saint *Peters* counsell, abstaine from them; when once an affection growes violent, meddle not with it, have nothing to doe with it; if thou dost, thou admittest an enemy into thy soule, that will betray it: as *David* when he had such a desire to the water the Souldiers fetcht him, *hee would not drinke it, but poured it out upon the ground*: so if once thy mind be set upon such a sport, or company, if affections once exceede their measure, meddle not with them.

And

20226.2

And then stand upon thy watch also ; for though thou hast armour on, yet if thou watchest not, it will doe thee no good : as *Saul* though hee was armed, yet being asleep, *David* came and took his Speare away ; therefore *be sober and watch*, and that thou mayest not fall asleepe, keepe thy selfe sober, and endeavour to weaken that law in thy members that fights against you, be doing something. A law not executed is antiquated, and weakened, and weares out, and custome strengthens a law ; the lesse obedience you yield to these lusts, the more you weaken them : when these lusts would have thee omit such a duty, if thou yieldest to it, thou strengthenest it ; if not, thou weakenest it.

And againe, a law is weakened when it is not cared for : care not for their threats ; and when the threatnings of a law are contemned, they lose their force. If sin tell thee thou wilt lose such a friend, incurre such dangers, care not ; and that weakens the force of it.

And if thou canst not do it by reason, do it by force, by a strong resolution ; *resistenda sunt, non subtilitate, sed impetu*. Overcome the desires of sin by a contrary resolution.

And



And I will be mercifull to their finnes, &c.

THese that follow here are the particular instances wherein hee would especially heare their prayers.

If they humble themselves and pray, whatsoever their finnes are, God will be mercifull unto them.

Now the reasons why he sayes he will be mercifull to their finnes (for so according to the former translation I rather reade it.)

That the Lord hereby might take away all objections : for some might say, their finnes were exceeding great and many, and many times reiterated; why but all these are but fit objects for mercy, w^{ch} triumphs over them all, as a mighty Sea swallowes them up as mole hills.

To take away that conceit, that all their humbling themselves and prayers, and new obedience here required, is not required as a condigne satisfaction for their sins : no saith the Lord, I will doe it meerely out of mercy ; though not without these, yet not for these. There is a secret popery to think something must be given, some satisfaction must be made, as if *God* else would not forgive, unlesse they satisfie for themselves, &c. and so ballance their sins. No, it is meere mercy, free forgivenesse.

To set an high price upon this gift, the pardon
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of sinne, I will be mercifull and forgive them. As if hee had said, remember, that you are worthy to bee destroyed, and not able to pay the least farthing. But it is of my meere pittie, that thou art forgiven. So that the matter we have in hand, is a gracious promise of mercy and forgivenesse, which of all points else I fall most willingly upon, which will make men come in, if any thing will do it. It is the proclamation of pardon, that must bring in pirates; when as the proclamation of rebellion drives them away. Men are more easily overcome with kindnesse then with threats; it is the Gospell melts and maketh men vile in their owne eyes.

Object,

But then some will say, that it is not necessary, that the preaching of the Law should goe before, if the Gospell doth it.

Ans.

Yes, the preaching of the Law is notwithstanding as a preparative. In all that are brought up in the Church, there is some knowledge in the Law that praecedes, but it is the Gospell that softneth the heart first; as ice is broken in peeces with hot water as well as with hammers, so is the heart with the Gospell, as well as with the hammer of the Law, and indeed maketh that knowledge of the Law that proceeded to bee operative, and sets it a worke: so as the Law in its true working cannot bee without the Gospell, nor the Gospell without the Law: so as to a perfect worke of the Gospell the knowledge of the Law must preceede.

Doct.

Whatsoever a mans sinnes are, if hee bee truly humbled for them and forsake them, they shall bee forgiven him.

This is the maine point you may observe by the way, that the Gospell was as fully preached to the *Iewes*, as to us. So you see it was here, they had the same way of being saved, that we have, as great mercy promised and dispensed. Onely these great mysteries of the Gospell wherein grace and mercy is displayed, were not opened so to them as unto us; they had the promises of forgivenesse as fully and clearely, but knew not the grounds of them; as Christs incarnation, death, and resurrection, as wee do; nor those glorious priviledges in particular w^{ch} wee have by Christ. For the prooffe of the maine point, take that one place to make it good to you, *Esay 1.18. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sinnes be as scarlet, they shall bee white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall bee as wooll.* The Prophet had exhorted them to learne to doe well, &c. But the people might object: What shall wee be the nearer for all this? if wee be such great sinners as you have even now declared us to bee? to prevent this the Prophet tells them, what though their sinnes be great and bloudie sins, of the deepest dye of guilt? (there are many kinds of red, but crimson and scarlet are the highest) yet you shall be as perfectly cleansed from all your sinnes as if you should see scarlet turned as white as snow, or crimson as white as wooll, and none of the former dy remaining: and when he tells this to them, marke his expression, *Come, let us reason together*, as if he had said, this is a point requires strong reasonings to perswade you to believe it; and indeed it is a hard thing truly to beleieve the pardon of their

202262

their finnes ; and the time will come when you will finde it to bee so : Wee will therefore set the Lord and your consciences together, and you shall see how the Lord reasoneth for himselfe, and how hee will make this good.

Wee will first prove it to you from all his Attributes.

Reas. I.

I From his truth, *the Lord* hath said it ; and this is argument enough, to perswade you : And therefore having made this promise of forgivenesse in the verse before, *that hee would subdue their iniquities and cast their finnes into the depths of the sea, he addes, thou wilt performe the truth to Iacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworne unto our fathers from the dayes of old.* As if hee had said, you may rest perswaded of this : for he hath not onely promised it, but hath sworne it, and that oath not taken lately, but of old ; there is an oath to it, and an old one, an oath that hath many witnesses, *Abraham* and *Iacob*, and all the fathers that have beene since : and will he not, thinke you, bee as good as his word : and that *Acts 10. 43.* *To him give all the Prophets witnesse, that through his name, whosoever believeth in him, shall receive remission of finnes.* It is Saint Peters speech to *Cornelius* ; sayes *Peter*, we deliver this from God to you, and not only we that are the Apostles say this, but to this truth doe all the Prophets, *Isay*, *Jeremy*, and all the rest beare witnesse. Now when the Lord hath said such things, and made an absolute promise, he expects you should believe it. It is a greater sin then you imagine, not to lay hold upon such promises. See how *the Lord* rea-

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sons it 1 Iohn 5. 9, 10, 11. *If wee receive the witnesse of men, the witnesse of God is greater; for this is the witnesse of God, &c. He that believeth not, God hath made him a lyar.* As if he should say, will you not believe? If a man that is of an honest disposition should promise you a thing, you would believe him: and will you not believe mee? As if a man had more truth in him then I have: yea further, you make the Lord a lyar, if you believe not this his record of his Son, what is this record? why saith the Apostle, I will repeate it againe, *The Lord hath given us eternall life, and this life is in his Sonne,* that is, whosoever believes and takes CHRIST, his sinnes shall be forgiven, and hee shall have life. It is the pardon that brings life to the condemned traytor.

2 But though hee hath said, this is ingaged sufficiently, and this is much to helpe our faith, yet when wee shall further heare and know him to bee one of a mercifull nature and gracious disposition, wee will goe the more willingly to him. Therefore adde to this, how the Lord expresseth his nature to us, *Exodus 34. 6, 7. The Lord God, mercifull, gracious and long suffering, and abundant in goodnesse and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sinne.* As if he should have said to Moses, wouldest thou know the very inward disposition and frame of my soule? this is my nature, to be mercifull and gracious &c. this is the *Lords Idea*, for his end here was to expresse himselfe unto us; know that this is his nature, and this will strengthen our faith in the promises, for all his promises doe but flow from this nature of his, and receive their strength therefrom,
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and *hee is rich in mercy, because it is his nature.*

3 Add to this the attribute of his wisdom, and that will also helpe us to believe his mercies. **G O D** that hath made these promises is exceeding wise, and knows with whom hee hath to doe, hee knowes, that originall corruption that is in us, and is the mother of all sinne, hee knowes our infirmities, and what is in our hearts, as hee that made us knowes what we are, as hee that makes any thing knowes the inward frame of it. It is no strange thing for him to see us fall into sinne. Therefore *Psal. 78.38,39.* after he had spoken of those strange rebellions, of the people of *Israell* into which they fell after their comming out of *Egypt*, yet saith hee, *Hee being full of compassion, destroyed them not, but forgave their iniquity, and why? because hee remembered they were but flesh.* And indeed, one would wonder how the **L O R D** could forgive so obstinate a people, that had such experience of his power and mercy by those great workes which he wrought afore them in bringing them out of *Egypt*, yet he did, because he remembered and wisely considered what ingredients went to make up their natures; *hee remembered they were but flesh.* So *Psal. 103. 13, 14.* the former part of that *Psalme*, is nothing else, but an expression of promises of forgiveness, and in the 14. verse hee gives this as the reason of all, *for hee knowes our frame, he remembereth that wee are dust:* hee knowes whereof wee are made, and therefore is exceeding mercifull.

4 Whereas there is one Attribute from which you object against the pardon of their sinnes, that
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the Lord notwithstanding is just, and this terrifies you and puts you off: even from this we may fetch an argument to strengthen our faith herein; for know that the Lord is therefore ready and willing to forgive, because hee is just. *1 John 1. 9. If wee confesse our finnes, hee is faithfull and just to forgive us.* This is the ground of all our comfort, that hee is just and faithfull, for is hee not engaged by promise, and is hee not faithfull to keepe his promise? Again, hath hee not beene satisfied and paid for our finnes by CHRIST? and his justice will not suffer him to require a second payment. It is just now with him to forgive, faithfulness hath reference to his promises, justice to that bloud of CHRIST the ranfome received, *which cleanseth us from all our finnes.*

5 If all these will not serve to perswade our hearts to believe, the Lord descends a little lower, and helps us out with an argument of his readinesse to pardon, from the consideration of what is in our selves, consider how you would deale with your children *Psal. 103. 13. Like as a father pittieth his children, so the Lord them that feare him.* If a child that is yours, offend you an hundred times, yet if he come in and humble himselfe, you will pardon him: And will not GOD, when his people humble themselves? We use but such arguments as God himselfe doth, and do but set him and your consciences together, to reason the case: But you will object againe, and say, it is possible for a child so to offend, as that a father will not nor cannot forgive him. True, but the Psalmists meaning is, not as if GOD

would pardon no more, then an earthly father ; but on the contrary, if you that are earthly fathers can doe so much, I that am an infinite *Lord God* and not man, can doe much more, who is Omnipotent and can doe whatsoever hee will, and shews his omnipotency in pardoning. I compare with this, *Esay 55.9. My thoughts are not as your thoughts.* What though your finnes bee great and in their owne thoughts unpardonable, and you thinke them greater then can bee forgiven? but *my thoughts* sayes *God*, are not as your thoughts ; hee speakes this of pardoning ; but *as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my thoughts above your thoughts, and my ways above yours, in multiplying to pardon.* Though you could not forgive, nay though you cannot thinke or imagine how such transgressions should be forgiven, yet I can forgive them.

A second sort of arguments is taken from the meanes and instrument by which forgivenesse is conveyed. *Wee are come to IESUS the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the bloud of sprinkling, which speakes better things then the bloud of Abel. Hebrewes 12, 24.* Hee speakes this as an encouragement to their faith, and it is as if hee had said, consider how the bloud of *Abel*, though but the bloud of a poore man, cryed so loud that it came up to heaven, that it brought down vengeance upon *Cain*, how loud then shall *CHRISTS* bloud speake? What is it able to procure for us? which speakes better things, that is, for mercy (which *God* is more ready to heare the cry for, then for vengeance) and this cry is not of the bloud of an ordinary

dinary man, as *Abel* was, but of the bloud of his owne Sonne, to which purpose compare with this that place, *Heb. 9. 14.* *How much more shall the bloud of Christ, who through the eternall Spirit offered up himselfe without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works?* As in the other place he compares it with *Abels* bloud, so here with *the bloud of Bulls and Goats*; which in the old law served by Gods appointment for *the outward purification of the flesh*, how much more, how infinitely transcendently more above our thoughts or imaginations, shall the bloud of the Sonne of God be able to purge your consciences? we not able to conceive, nor he to expresse; he onely sayes, *how much more, &c.* and he backeth it with two Reasons, which put together, shew the transcendency of that sufficiency in Christs bloud to cleanse us: the first from the eternall Spirit, whereby he offered up himselfe; it was not the bloud or sacrifice of a meere man, but of God: which sacrifice was in it selfe without spot.

There are three objections we usually make against our selves by reason of our sinnes.

1. That they are so many.
2. So great.
3. That they are reiterated and often fallen into.

Now the sprinkling of the bloud of Christ thus offered is sufficient *to cleanse your consciences from,* and to take away all these, *Ezek. 36. 25.* *then will I sprinkle cleane water upon you, and ye shall be cleane from all your filthinesse, and from all your idols will I cleanse you.* The bloud of Christ is the water there

202262

meant, which *cleanseth from sinne and filthinesse*; and *from all*, though never so many, and *from filthinesse*, and *idols*, from such sinnes, though never so great. Ah! but I have also fallen often into them, *Zach. 13. 1.* His blood is therefore compared to a *fountain set open for sinne and for uncleannesse*; not a *cisterne*, but a *fountain*, a continuall spring perpetually running to cleanse us; so that as there is a spring of sinne in us, so as we are defiled againe and againe, so there is a spring of vertue in his blood, to cleanse us, never to be dried up.

The last reason is taken from the freenesse of the covenant which God hath made with mankind, *If any man be athirst, yea if any man will come, let him come and drinke of the waters of life freely.* See the manner how it is set down, *Ioh. 7. 37.* *In the last day, a great day of the feast, Iesus stood and cried, saying, if any man thirst, let him come to me, and drinke: he makes a proclamation for all to come, as also, Rev. 21. 6. and 22. 17.* where he makes the like generall invitation, and adds, that they shall have it freely; so the tenour of the covenant runs: that *if any thirst* (those indeed that do not, have nothing to do with it) *let him come and take freely*; that is, I will bestow it without any other condition, *but coming*, without which no man can partake of it, and *thirsting*, without which no man will come, or prize it.

The consideration of which covenant therefore should move us and helpe us to believe the truth of this point, that whatsoever our sinnes are, yet if we humble our selves, &c. they shall be pardoned.

Before

Before I come to apply this to any man ; I must exclude those whom the Lord excludes, or rather who exclude themselves. Still remember what is the last letter of his name. *Exodus 34.6.* That *hee will not hold the wicked innocent.* Thou that art a carnall man, hast nothing to doe with this childrens bread ; thou art a Dog : which may be made good to thy conscience, out of *1 Pet. 2. ult.* *Like the dog thou returnest to thy vomit :* For in thy sicknesse and in thy distresse didst thou not make many promises and resolutions against thy wayes and courses ? and after thy recovery, didst thou not returne to them againe with as much greedinesse as ever ?

2 Again, thou art such an one as doest not thirst after these promises ; carest no more for them then for thy old shooes ; these *precious promises* (which as is said before) containe in them most rich and precious promises, and none shall ever obtaine them that doth not in some measure of truth prize them above all things whatsoever. Thou that never hadst thy heart broken with the apprehension of sin and Gods wrath canst not come to thirst after them, and so hast nothing to doe with this water of life. A man that is still whole hearted ever since hee was borne, and never affrighted with sinne and wrath, may heare these promises spoken of, but hath nothing to doe with them.

3 They that are hypocrites, are also excluded, for they are to have their portion in hell fire, and therefore whilst remaining such, have nothing to do with the promises. Now an hypocrite is one that is not willing to omit holy duties altogether, and

yet not willing to doe them throughly, one that like the Eagle soares high in faire pretences, but still hath the prey that is below in his eye, and will stoope for it upon occasion, eying preferment, credit, riches &c. all the while: Thou mayest bee white in thine owne eyes, and washt before a communion, or so, as a Swine may bee washt as well as a Sheepe, but yet the Swinish nature remaines.

4 Or it may bee thou art a wicked man.

Object,
Answer.

But you will say, who are those wicked men? I will give you a description of them, which no man shall refuse, they are such as hate the *Lord*, nor can any man think much, if hee bee cal'd a wicked man, comming within the compasse of this character; for it is the note given in the second commandement. Now when we heare this, every man will be ready to say, I hope my condition is good, I am none of them that hate the *Lord*: but know, there are many thousands that think well of themselves, who yet when it comes to the tryall will be found to hate the *Lord*. And therefore to try thee in this, give mee leave to aske thee but a few questions.

1 Dost thou not hate the law? dost thou not wish that the Law were not so strict, and that it gave more liberty? Let an unregenerate man try himselfe by this, and he will find such a disposition in him, that he desires that the law would give him leave to commit such and such a sin; he esteemes of the Law as a thing that is contrary to him, and therefore their complaint of godly men is, that *their wayes are contrary to ours*, in the booke of *Wisedome*. What wayes? the wayes of the law: for where is contrariety, there

is

s hatred; and if they hate the law, they hate the law-giver *God*, for the law is the expresse image of *God*.

2. Againe, I would aske thee, if this be not also thy disposition, that thou hast no great delight to be where the Lord is: thou hast not any delight in holy duties, other wise than as custome, and naturall conscience have made them familiar to thee; nor to be in the company of the Saints (for where two or three of them are, there *God* is among them) but when thou art among them, thou art as it were out of thy element; if they be such as are formall like thy selfe, thou canst away with them; but if they be holy, and the holinesse of *God* appeare in them, thou delightest not in them; thou couldest, it may be, be among the Saints, if they hold their tongues; but let *God* shine in them, then thou canst not indure to be there.

3. Againe, dost thou hate those that are like the Lord? for if thou dost, thou hatest the Lord himselfe: for as we try our love to the Lord, by our love to the brethren; so our hatred also. Is there a secret dislike of them, though thou knowest not why, an antipathy, though happily thou canst not give a reason of it? It is because *God* hath put an enmity, and there no man can put amity: all endowments, sweetnesse of converse and disposition, eminency of parts in the Saints, will not take away the enmity that is in wicked men against them. *David* was a Poet, a souldier, a man of excellent parts, wise and valiant, yet had abundance of hatred amongst men for his goodnesse.

4. Againe, dost thou not desire that there were

no God? Couldst thou not be content to live for ever in this world, so that thou wert happy here, and so there were no hell? Couldst thou not be content that there were no heaven, no God, no Iudge at the last? If every unregenerate man would examine himselfe, he should find this in himselfe. Now if any wish that such an one were not, that he were *sublatus de medio*, it is a signe he hates him: for that is the property of hatred, to desire the utter removall of the things hated.

5. Againe, dost thou not lie in some sin which thou knowest is a sinne? Now every man that lies in a sinne, a knowne sinne, feareth God as a Iudge. Let him be a thiefe, and he will feare the Iudge, and whom a man thus feareth, he hateth, *Quem metuunt, oderunt*, he that walkes in darknesse hates the light, and God who is the author of that light. Dost thou therefore live in some evill way or other, wherein thou dost allow thy selfe? thou hast no interest in these promises: onely those that claime interest in the promises, who make conscience of all their wayes, dare not omit the least duty, nor perform it slightly.

Lastly consider, art thou not one of the foolish virgins, deferring repentance, not caring to provide oyle in time, but thinkest thou canst do it time enough at death? and, I will come in ere I die, like the sluggard in the *Proverbs*, tumbling in the bed of thy sin securely, and loath to rise, turning like the doore on the hinges; but still remaining upon the same hinges. The Lord hath said, *Deut. 29.* that he will not be mercifull to such a man, but his anger shall smoke against him.

But

But you will say, what do you preach damnation to me? will you leave us desperate?

I answer you, we preach damnation to you whilst you are in such courses, and would make you despaire of your selves, to drive you out of your selves unto Christ, and it were an houre well spent, to put you out of hope; but what? may we have no hope left? None, in the estate you stand, but that of the hypocrite, which perisheth with him: for if thy hope were true, it would purifie thy heart, as *S. Iohn* speaks. But I may pray? But if thou continuest in thy finnes, thy finnes shall out-cry thy prayers, and at the day of thy death, when the least interest of these promises will be worth a world, it will be said to thee, that thou hadst nothing to do with them, and there was a time when God call'd upon thee, and thou wouldst not: and therefore then, though thou cry to him, God will not heare thee.

But if there be any broken-hearted sinner desiring to feare the Lord, and serve him sincerely, that have this witnesse in their consciences, that though they do not that good they would, yet they strive against all sins, allow themselves in none, whether small or great; to you I say, that of the Apostle, *1 Pet. 1. 13. Trust perfectly on the grace brought unto you by the revelation of Iesus Christ*, τελειῶς ἐλπίζετε, trust not by halves, but trust perfectly: if I had bidden you trust in your sanctification, you might have done it imperfectly, because your sanctification is but imperfect; but seeing it is the free grace of God is brought to you as a rocke to trust and
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rely upon; trust perfectly upon it; commit all your waight and burthen to it; *Heb. 6. 18.* God, when he made the covenant of grace, rooke an oath to that end, *that we might have strong consolation*; this is an argument commonly forgotten among Christians, and so they want that *strong consolation* which they might have. Do you think it a small matter, to take an oath of God partly and in any degree in vain? *God hath sworn that you might have strong consolation*, and he would have it so strong, that when *Satan* sets upon you, it may be as a strong fortresse to hold out against all assaults: why is your faith so weak then? what are the impediments?

I. One is, that we are deceived in the covenant: hath not the *Lord* promised to *justifie the ungodly*, and commanded us to *believe on him that justifies the ungodly*? *Rom. 4. 5.* and bidden us come with an empty hand? and thou comest with an handfull of humiliation; and sayest, that thou durst not come before, and now I can come better in: the more thou hast in thy hand, the lesse firme is thy hold. A man that is in danger to be drowned, cannot take hold of a Cable cast to save his life, if he keepes any thing in his hand, an empty hand takes the fastest hold: thy humiliation if true, will empty thee of all selfe conceit: therefore if thou through humiliation hast nothing of thine owne to trust to, thou art the fitter object for mercy. Be not alwaies poring downewards on thy sinnes, but looke up to God, *Heb. 6.* *They have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to the hope laid before us, which hope we have as an anker of the soule both*

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sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that wth n^e the vaile, Veri. 18, 19. This our hope is not said to bee any thing in our selves, but is as a refuge which we flie unto out of our selves, and is laid afore us, growes not within from what is within us, and is from above: now by hope, we are not to understand the thing hoped for, or the grace of hope in us, but that sure promise of God ratified by an oath; this is the object of our hope, and so call'd *our hope*, that is it which is our refuge, and which is laid afore us, and proceeds from Gods owne brest and nature; which if we anchor upon, we shall have strong consolation, both for surenesse of not failing us, and for steadinesse establishing our hearts; but whilst we flie for refuge to any thing in our selves, or cast anchor upon it, we are tossed with every wave.

2. Our daily infirmities, they also are a great impediment. A man thinks, if I had faith, that would so purifie my heart, as I should not fall thus oft as I do; which whilst I do, how can I have such strong consolation? for this I say to all upright hearted Christians, that their infirmities should not dishearten their faith and consolation, but they should rather labour to strengthen their sanctification. Say with thy selfe, because my sin^s are and have been greater than other mens, therefore I will labour more for sanctification hereafter, I wil love more than others, and be more serviceable for the time to come; but say not, therefore I will doubt or despaire of Gods mercy.

3. Hinderance to their laying hold of the promises

miles of forgivenesse, is a conceit of their want of humiliation, as if they were not humbled enough; but if it be so much as brings thee home to Christ, if thou thirst for Christ, so as nothing will content thee till thou hast him; feare not to lay hold, this is enough, stand not upon the measure.

Lastly, it may be thou hast not prayed enough for assurance of forgivenesse, and therefore wantest it. It is here put in as a condition, *if my people pray*, and among other things for this, to forgive your finnes, and to give them the assurance of it. All the arguments in the world cannot perswade the heart of this, nothing but the spirit of adoption; and can so great a mercy be obtained without fervent prayer? therefore go to God, and intreat his favour, and though he deferres, yet continue in prayer: for it may be the Lord also withhold it, because he would have thee set an high prize upon it: which thou wouldst not do, if thou shouldst obtaine it easily: but be not discouraged, continue thou to pray still, and in the end thou shalt have it with a full hand.

Hear you me, all ye that are upright and sincere in heart, here is your comfort, continue thus to seeke Gods face, and all your finnes shall be as if they had never beene committed by you: and what is said of the finnes of *Israel* and *Judah*, *Ier. 50. 20.* *The iniquity of Iacob shall be sought for, and there shall none be found:* so shall thine be in the day when they shall be sought for: Is not this a great and unspeakeable mercy? A man shall bee as if hee had never committed sinne; even as if hee were

were as innocent as *Adam* was in Paradise.

But you will object and say, can finnes that have beene committed cease to have beene committed, or cease to have beene finnes? *Object.*

Answer: tis true, that which is once done can never bee undone. All the acts remaine as things once done, so as it may bee said, they were committed, and were thus hainous; when therefore it is said, *there shall be none*, the meaning is, they shall bee of no efficacy, they shall never bee able to doe you hurt, as our Saviour said to his Disciples, *Luk. 10. 19. You shall tread upon Serpents and Scorpions, and they shall not hurt you*, so I may say of sin, *it shall not hurt you* because the sting is taken away in and by Christ; or as that fire in *Nebuchadnezzars* furnace, it had power enough to burne others, but not so much as to singe an haire of the three children, because *Christ* was with them; so those finnes which would sting and shall sting others to death, because of their impenitence, yet shall doe thee no hurt, but fall off like the Viper off from Saint *Pauls* hand, but not hurt thee. It is an opinion of some, that *God* can see no sinne in his children, because say they, there are none (when a man is once in Christ) for to bee seene: But that is not the meaning of that saying, *God sees no iniquity in Jacob*: they are there, but as in a debt-booke crossed and cancell'd; though the lines bee drawne over, yet the summes may be read, yet so as they cannot be enacted, or sued for, because they are crossed and cancell'd. A falling starre loseth its light by little and little, and when it comes to the earth, it goes quite out; so when finnes begin

202262

begin to fall from their proper element and Sphere, that is an unregenerate heart, where they had dominion and raigned and moved as in their Oibe, the light and influence of it decays, and shall at length both in the guilt and power of it wholly vanish.

I will also adde to this, this caution: the Saints must know that for all this, their finnes are retained, till they actually repent againe, the Lords wrath is kindled against them, and they may feele such effects of it as may make their hearts ake. Thus the Lord met *Moses*, and would have slayne him in the Inne for neglecting that ordinance of circumcision; the sinne was not forgiven till he had humbled himselfe, and amended his fault; so *G o d* was angry with the *Israelites* that fled before their enemies, till the accursed thing was taken away: So when *David* sinned in the matter of *Vriah*, it is said in the end of that Chapter *2 Sam 11.27. The thing that David had done displeased the Lord*, and there was the wrath of a father against him, though not of an enemy: and when was it that *G o d* was well pleased with him againe, but when hee had humbled himselfe and repented? Therefore that you may have strong consolation, search and examine your hearts and lives, see that there bee no way of wickednesse unrepented of in you, before you apply all these promises, which then you may doe to your comfort.

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Somewhat is now to bee said, even to those whom before wee excluded; for the end of our preaching is not to shut them for ever out. If the *L o r d* will bee mercyfull to our finnes, if wee be hum.

humbled ; here is an open doore for those that are without, a ground, to exhort them to come in. Come and welcome. God is exceeding mercifull, and ready to forgive and receive you. If any thing will draw men in, they are the promises of mercy ; the hue and cry makes the thiefe to fly away the faster.

The Proclamation of pardon brings the rebels in, and what greater motive can wee use than this, that whatever your finnes are or have beene, never so great in themselves and aggravated with never so many circumstances, yet if you will come in and humble your selves, and turne to God, God will bee mercifull to you. No matter what thy finnes have beene : all the matter is, what thy humility is, what thy resolutions to confesse and forsake thy finnes are ; they have not gone beyond that price which hath beene paid for them : And God will not only pardon their sins, but also leave a blessing behind. If you indeed should come thus to any man whom you have offended, hee would say, what are you not ashamed to come to mee having wronged mee thus, to looke mee in the face ? not to aske forgivenesse onely, but to aske such a kindnesse, such a favour at my hands also ? how could you have the face to doe it ? But the Lord, hee never gives that answer, for hee is not as man, *Ier. 3. 11. Though if a man put away his wife, and shee becomes another mans, hee will not receive her againe ; yet returne to mee, sayes God.* It is possible for men to commit such finnes that men cannot forgive, but God can pardon any.

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You

You know the pernicious counsell which *Achitophel* gave to *Absolon* ; to goe in to his fathers wives, to make an irrecoverable breach betweene his father and him, judging it such an injury, as *David* would never put up, yet *returne to mee* sayes God. God can pardon any, *I will scatter thy sinnes as a myst, and thine iniquity as a cloud.*

Some sins are small as mysts, some more great and grosser, as a cloud. Gods mercy is able to scatter both. Doe not say, oh I had beene a happy man, if I had not fallen into this or that sinne, I had then beene pardoned. Tis true, that in respect of Gods dishonour, it had beene better thou hadst not committed it ; but yet this I will say, that in respect of obtaining pardon thou mayest bee happy notwithstanding ; if thou humble thy selfe, this sinne will not barre thee from happinesse ; but thou maist be in as good a condition after thou art come home as any other whose sinnes have beene smaller : and know that when thou art once come home, God looking upon thee in Christ, all thy sinnes displease him not so much, as thy repentance in and through Christ pleaseth him.

Quest. But how shall a man be perswaded of this Gods readynesse to forgive?

Answ. Consider that place, *As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the death of a sinner, but rather that hee turne from his wickednesse and live :* Hee hath taken an oath for it, that hee delights more in saving than in destroying : and you may believe him. Consider also what Christ was wont to doe in the dayes of his flesh : and hee is still as mercifull an high priest

as ever : None were more welcome to him than *Publicans* and *Harlots*, that came with repentance to him ; and hee is as ready to receive us now as them then.

I doubt not but that Christ is willing, but what will God the Father do ?

It is certaine, that hee is not willing to have his Sonnes blood spilt in vaine, which should bee of none effect if such sinners as you are should not bee saved : Hereby the blood of Christ is improved, that it is sprinkled on many for great sinnes. Think not therefore that God is backward to pardon, *Psal.* 130.3,4. There are two arguments more to helpe us in this, *If hee should marke what is done amisse, who should stand ?* none should be saved. Now it is not his will that all flesh should perish, and therefore he will not take the advantage to cast men cleane off for their sinnes ; againe, none else would worship him. *There is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared :* It is his full purpose to have some servants to feare and worship him. Yea shall I goe further ? God is not onely ready to forgive, but desirous of it, yea hee is glad at the heart when a great sinner doth come in : which is noted to us in the Parable of *the lost Sheepe*, and *the lost groat* : how did the woman rejoyce for the finding of her groat, and the Shepheard for his Sheepe ? And likewise in the Parable of *the lost Sonne*, how glad was hee, when hee heard that his Son was comming home, that yet had lived riotously and spent his goods ? it was to shew, that God was so affected when a great sinner returnes to him. Besides, he doth not

Object.

Resp.

onely say, if you will come, I keepe open house, I will not shut you out; but inviteth them, calleth them; yea more, sends his ministers to fetch them in; yea more, entreateth, beseecheth, commandeth, threatneth.

Object.

But you will say, is it possible, that I should bee forgiven, that have committed so many finnes, so great, so hainous, and continued so long in them?

Answ.

Yes, it is possible for you. Marke that place, *1 Cor. 6. 9.* Hee reckons up as great finnes, as can bee named. *And such were some of you, but now you are washed.* You see what kind of people there were forgiven, whence wee may gather, that those that are guilty of those finnes now may bee forgiven as well as then, *such were some of you.* Whosoever thou art, it is no matter what thou hast beene; all the matter is what thou wilt bee. Put case, any of the old Prophets should come to thee, or any man in particular, and say, wilt thou bee content now to turne to *G O D*? if thou wilt, all thy finnes shall bee washt away, and thou shalt bee made an heire of Heaven: it would cause him that hath any ingenuity, to relent and say, *L O R D*, canst thou now bee so mercifull to mee as to forgive mee after all this? loe *L O R D*, I will come in and turne unto thee.

I aske thee this question, whether art thou content to quit all thy finnes presently upon assurance of being received, if thou dost? if thou answerest no, art thou not worthy to bee destroyed? if yes, is not this great comfort?

But

But some may say, if heaven gate stand thus wide open, I may come and be welcome at any time. *Thou vile wretch*, that darest to have such a thought! Dost thou not know, that every such refusall of such an offer is so dangerous, as it may put thee into hazard of never having the like againe? If the gate of heaven stood thus alwayes open, why then did God sweare in his wrath of some *Israelites*, that they should never enter into his rest? and what is the reason that God said of those that were invited to the feast, but refused to come, that *they should never taste of it*? The reason is there given, it is said, the master of the feast was full of wrath at the refusall of his offer, both because his love and kindnesse was despised: that filleth a man with indignation, and so the Lord: and also because the thing offered was of so much price; it being the kingdome of heaven, and the precious bloud of Christ. Therefore whensoever such an offer is made and refused, God is exceeding angry. There goes an axe and a sword with this offer, to cut downe every tree that will not bring forth good fruit. Say not when you heare of this offer, I am glad there is such a thing, I will accept of it another time, but it comes too soone for me now. Consider this, that the end of the comming of the Lord *Iesus*, was not onely to save the soules of men; if onely so, then indeed this might have been done at any time, even at the last: but his end also was, *Titus 2. 14.* That he might purifie to himselfe a peculiar people, zealous of good workes, which is a greater end than that which went before in the

verse, to redeeme us from all iniquity, to purchase to himselfe a people that should serve him in their life time: and canst thou thinke, that thou that hast served thy lusts all thy life time, shalt yet be accepted at death? It is a common saying with you, that if a man be called at the eleventh houre, he shall be received: 'tis true, if thou beest called then first, and not before, as the thiefe, who was not call'd afore, was then accepted: but what if thou hast beene call'd afore, and hast not accepted, but put off till death? thy case then will be exceeding dangerous. Againe, I aske thee, what is it makes thee resolve to come in at death? If love to Christ, then it would sooner; if to thy selfe, how shall such a conversion be accepted?



Come we now to the last words:

And I will heale their land.

VVE have these three points may be observed out of them.

1. *That all calamities and troubles proceed from sinne;* this I note from the order of the words: hee first forgives their sinnes, then heales their land.

2. *That if calamities be removed, and sinnes be not forgiven;*

forgiven; they are removed in judgement, not in mercy.

3. That if sinne be once forgiven, the calamity will soone be taken away.

For the first, all calamity is from sinne, troubles from transgression. In the chaine of evils, sinne is the first linke that drawes on all the rest; as grace is in the chaine of blessings and comforts. Consider this in all kinds of judgements, which we may reduce to three heads.

1. Temporall calamities, about the things of this life, they are all from sinne, both publike and private. What was the reason of *Salomons* troubles? The Lord stirred up an adversary against him, because he departed from the Lord, and had set up idolatry: so the sword departed not from *Dauids* house, because of his sinne with *Bathsheba*, and the murther of *Vriab*. So *Asa*, 2 *Chron.* 16. the Prophet tels him, *Henceforth thou shalt have warre, because thou hast not rested on the Lord.* I could give a hundred instances for this.

2. Sort of judgements are spirituall, which are much more grievous than the former; when a man is given up to his lusts, and to hardnesse of heart: and this proceedeth from some other finnes that went before; and it is a sure rule, that you never see a man given up to worke uncleannesse with greedinesse, or to such open scandalous finnes, but the first rise of it was his unconscionable walking with God in secret, as the Apostle *Paul* sayes of the Gentiles, *Rom.* 1. 20. to 24. That because when they

202262

knew God, they glorified him not as God, God gave them up to vile affections. So Psal. 8. 11, 12. But my people would not hearken, and Israel would none of me: So I gave them up to their owne hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels. As if he had said, I used all the meanes: they still refused, and would none of me, and therefore I gave them up. Seest thou a man given up to a lust, his heart so cemented to it, as he cannot live without it? know this is in judgement to him for some unconscionable walking before, and not practising according to his knowledge.

3. There is yet a judgement beyond these, when the Lord forsaketh the creature, and withdrawes himselfe from a man; which though men do little account of, is the fearefullest of all others. The losse of *Gods* presence is a losse unvaluable. Take a man that makes wealth or honour *his God*, take that prop from him, and how doth his heart sink within him? how much more, when the true God shall be departed from a man? that God that is the God of all comfort, if he be withdrawne, the heart sinks into a bottomlesse pit of horreur; as when the Sun is gone, all things run into darknesse. All comfort is from some measure or degree of *Gods* presence, though men do not take notice of it; which when it is taken away, there remains nothing but horreur and despaire: when God was departed from *Saul*, 1 *Sam.* 16. he from that day ran into one error after another, in his government, till he was destroyed; and the cause of this was sinne; he had cast off the Lord, and therefore the

the Lord rejected him. The like was *Caines* case, *Gen. 4.* His judgement was, to be banish'd from the presence of the Lord, which he acknowledgeth to be an insupportable punishment, which he was not able to beare.

When any trouble is upon thee, stick not in the rind and bark of it, but looke through it and beyond it, to the inward root of it; look to sinne as the cause, and thou shalt find it so: it may be the immediate cause and instrument may be some outward thing, some enemy of thy disgrace, some sicknesse, &c. but who hath permitted them to worke? is it not the Lord? and what is the motive of his permission but sinne? men may have many severall motives to do this or that, but nothing moves the Lord but sinne and grace. When an enemy comes upon thee, say not, this man is the cause of this evill, but the Lord hath suffered him to worke, and sinne hath occasion'd this suffering, *2 Chron. 12. 5, 7.* *Shishak* was but the *violl*, through whose hands God powred out his wrath; so I may say, sicknesse is but the *violl*, it is the Lords wrath that is powred out in it. Amend this common error, that men are ready to seek out the naturall causes of the evils that befall them: if it be sicknesse, they look to such a distemper in diet, or cold, &c. as the cause of it: so if they miscarry in any enterprize, what folly and oversight hath been the cause of it? These are but the naturall and immediate causes, but Christians should looke to and seeke out to the supernaturall. When there came a famine upon the land of *Judah* for three yeares,

2 Sam.

Use 1.

2 *Sam.* 21.1. the naturall cause was evident, which was a great drought (for that famine was healed by raine afterwards) and so in those hot countries famine came by drought alone, but *David* rests not here, but went to the Lord, and enquired out the reason, the sinne that should be the cause of it: And God told him it was for the sinne of *Saul*, and his bloody house in slaying the *Gibeonites*: as wise statesmen, when they find a meane person in a treason, they rest not there, but seeke further what deepe heads was in the businesse, and who was the contriver of the plot. When *Jacob* saw the Angels descend and ascend, he looks to the top of the ladder, and saw the Lord there sending them to and fro. Looke not to the stayres of the ladder, one or two that are next to thee, but to the top of the ladder, and there thou shalt see the Lord sending one Angell to do thee a mischief, another to be a Saviour to thee. If you say, how shall I know for what sinne it is? Pray earnestly, and enquire as *David* did, and as *Ioshua* did, when he saw the people flee afore their enemies, that God would reveale to thee the particular sinne; and if thou canst not find out the particular sin (for it may be some sinne long ago committed, or some secret sinne) yet be sure that sinne is the cause of it; for as in the works of nature, we know the vapours arise out of the earth, and ascend invisibly, but come downe againe in stormes and showers which we are able to see, and are sensible of; so the judgements may be open and manifest enough, but not the sinnes, but some secret sinne that past by thee without notice taken is the cause of it.

Learn

Learne hence to see sinne in its owne colours; sinne is a secret and invisible evill, and in it selfe as abstractly considered, is hard to be seene of the best: therefore looke upon it as it is cloathed with calamities; and when you view it under the cloathing, you will have another opinion of it than you had before. If you should know a man, who, wheresoever hee comes, doth nothing but mischief, poysons one, stabbs another, &c. and leaves every where some prints of his villany; how hatefull and terrible would he be unto you? it is sinne that playes all these reaks among us; if sinne come upon a man cloathed and armed with Gods wrath, as it often doth at death, then it is terrible. Why doe we not looke upon it thus at other times, but because we do not behold it in the fearefull effects of it, as then in the wrath due to it we doe? Sinne is the same at all times else, but our fancy is not alwayes the same, as the body is alwayes the same, though the shadow bee greater or lesser: that which we now count a small sinne, as swearing, and petty oaths, will one day be terrible; such a sinne as was committed by *Ananias* and *Sapphira* would seeme small, it may be, to you in it selfe alone, but see it cloathed with that judgement that befell them dying at the Apostles feet; so see the sinne of *Ahabs* oppressing *Naboth*, which you may looke at but as doing a little wrong to a poore man, by a great man; but see it cloathed with *Ahabs* death, and the dogs licking his bloud, and it will appeare to be most hainous; so the prophanenesse of *Nadab* and *Abihu*, offering strange fire.

Learne,

202262

Use 3.

Learne, that if you would remove the crosse, you must remove the sinne first. You may observe it in diseases, that twenty medicines may be used, and yet if you hit not right upon the cause of the disease, the patient is never the better; but if that be removed, the symptoms presently vanish: so when some crosse is upon us, we set our heads, and hands, and friends a worke to remove it, but all in vaine, whilst we hit not the cause, and that is sinne, which whilst it continues, the crosse will continue.

The reason why our peace and prosperity is entertained with so many crosses and troubles is, because our lives are interwoven with so many sins. The cause of Gods unevennesse in his dispensations of his mercy towards thee, is the unevennesse of thy carriage towards him. Hast thou a healthfull body, a sure estate, many friends? Think not that these shall secure thee: see *Adam* in paradise, *Salomon* in his glory, *David* on his mountaine, which he thought made strong; and you shall see *Adam*, when sinne had made a breach upon him once, quickly made miserable; and sinne bringing in upon *Salomon* an army of troubles after it; and upon *David* in the height, sin bringing in upon him the hazzard of his kingdome, the rebellion of his sonne: sinne in a mans best estate makes him miserable, and grace in the worst estate makes a man happy. *Paul* with a good conscience was happy in prison, *David* through faith was happy at *Ziglag*.

Object.

But you will say, how is it, that calamities thus follow

follow upon sinne? we feele no such thing: and thus because it is deferred, the hearts of men are set to do evill.

All this is to be understood with this caution, that *sinne when it is perfected, brings forth death*, and not till then. God stayed till *Abab* had oppressed *Naboth*, and gotten possession, and then when he was seen, God sends the message of death to him, *What, hast thou killed, and also taken possession?* Thus *Iudas*, he was a thiefe whilst he kept the bag, and went on in many sinnes in Christs family, and Christ lets him alone, and he goes on till he had betrayed his Master; and then when his sinne was perfected, and come to its full ripeness, then at last Christ comes with judgement upon him. There is a certaine period of judgement, and if the Lord stay execution till then, thou hast little cause to comfort thy selfe, *Eccles. 8. 11, 12. Because sentence against an evill worke is not speedily executed, therefore the hearts of men are set to do evill*: As if the wise man should have said, Goe to you, you that have peace, and comfort your selves in this, that whatsoever the Word and the Ministers threaten, yet you feel nothing; yet remember that as soon as the sin is committed, the sentence goeth forth, (& therefore he useth the word *sentence* to expresse this) though it be not so speedily executed, yet it goes forth at the same time with the commission of the sinne. The sentence, you know, is one thing, the execution another; and many times there is (and so may bee here) a long distance betwixt the sentence of the Iudge, and the execution of

Resp.

of it: So as his meaning is, that execution is deferred. Therefore flatter not your selves; sentence is gone forth, and execution will follow. For the amplification of this, that vision of *Zasharie* seemest to make it good, *Zach.* 5. When swearing and theft had beene committed, Verse 3. *He saw a flying roule*, Verse 2. which Verse the 3. is interpreted to be *the curse that goeth over all the earth*, for him that *stealeth and sweareth*, Verse 3. which curse may be upon the wing long ere it seizeth on the prey: but it goes forth as soone as those sins were committed, that is, the execution may be deferred: which is there further shewed in the parable of the *Ephah*, which sets out (as there) the measure of the peoples iniquities, for so, Verse 8. he sayes, this is wickednesse, which untill it be filled, hath not the weight of lead laid upon the mouth of it, it being a long while ere God comes to execution, and not till their sinnes are full, the plummet of lead being laid; as it signifies that then their sins are sealed up, with the waight of lead rolled upon them, that none might be lost or forgotten, but God remembers them all: and then *he saw two women come, and the wind was in their wings*, Verse 9. that is, when their sinnes are thus full, and their measure sealed up, their judgement comes swiftly like the wind, and carries it into *Shinar*, and there this wickednes is set upon its own base, that is, in its proper place, a place of misery, as hell is said to be *Iudas* his owne place. Sinne may sleepe a long time, like a sleeping debt, which is not call'd for and demanded for many yeares: but if a man hath not an acquaintance,

acquaintance, the creditor may call for it in the end and lay the debtor in prison. It was forty yeares after *Sauls* slaying of the *Gibeonites* ere execution went forth, and vengeance was call'd for it. So *Iob* sinne which hee committed in slaying *Abner* (which was slaying innocent blood) slept all *David* time, till *Solomon* came to the crowne.

Doe not therefore as ill husbands in debt, that suffer the suite to runne on from tearme to tearme, till they bee out law'd, and pay both debts and charges, and all. Thy finnes are a bringing *swift damnation*, and it *slumbers not*: it is on foote already, and will overtake thee, and meete at thy journeyes end, the end of thy dayes. Let it therefore be thy wisdom to take up the suite and compound the matter with God betimes, else thou shalt not onely pay the debt and smart for the sinne it selfe, but for all the time of Gods patience towards thee, the riches of Gods patience spent, and beare all the arrerages, *Rev. 2. I gave her space to repent, but shee repented not*; God meant to make her pay for all the time hee gave her to repent in.

The next point from these words is:

That if the calamity bee removed, and the sinne bee not healed, it is never removed in mercy, but in judgement. Doct.

Hee doth here promise first to forgive the sinne, and then to heale the Land; so as if hee should have healed the Land without forgivenesse, it had beene no mercy.

Because

202262

Reas. 1.

Because sinne is worse than any crosse whatsoever. If therefore hee takes away the crosse, and leaves the sinne behind; it is a signe thou art a man whom the Lord hates. When a Physician takes away the medicine, and leaves the disease uncured, it is a signe the parties case is desperate; or that the Physician means to let him perish.

Reas. 2.

Because the Lord doth nothing in vaine; if therefore an affliction doth a man no good, it must needs do him hurt; for that which doth neither good nor hurt, must needs bee in vaine. That was a property of the Idols of the Heathens (which are called the vanities of the Heathen) that they did nei her good nor hurt: And such should Gods actions bee. Therefore if the crosse doth a man no good by healing his sinne, it must needs do him hurt. You will aske what hurt? It doth *edificare ad Gehennam*, builds thee up to destruction. If you saw a corrosive applyed to the live flesh and to eate out that, and not the dead, you would say it were applyed for hurt: So if you see an affliction that workes upon the live flesh, that wounds the heart with sorrow, but takes not away the sin, such a crosse you would reckon not the medicine of a friend, but the wound of an enemy.

Vse.

By this thou maiest judge of thine estate, and of Gods love to thee, by the issue of thine afflictions. Tis true, that all kinds of crosses fall alike to all, sicknesse, poverty, &c. upon the godly and the wicked; the difference is onely in the issue: The same Sunne shines upon all, but it hardens one, and it softens another; and the same winde blowes upon all, but

but it carrieth one Ship into an Haven, and dasheth another against a rock. Consider therefore whether thy afflictions brings thee home to the Lord, or whether it drives thee from the Lord upon the rockes. Tis a common observation, that when physicke works not, you say the partie is mortally sicke: So when afflictions worke not, it is a signe hee is a man of death. If, as *Matt. 7.* Hee that takes not an admonition from his brother, is desperately wicked, either as a Swine to trample on it, or as a Dog to devour: How much more, when a man is admonished by God himselfe, and is worse after it? Now every affliction is an admonition from the Lord. In the fifth of *Esay* when God had pruned his vineyard, and it did it no good; it was then at the next doore to destruction, and laying wast. If therefore thou hast had some great affliction, and now it is off; thinke with thy selfe what profit and good came to thee by it. Did it come from Gods providence, or not? if it did, there was something he intended, and which it did intimate to thee: If thou then didst suffer it to passe by without taking any notice of *God* in it, or if thou didst, yet art not reclaimed, God must needs bee exceedingly provoked, he will suffer the tree to stand one yeare or so, to see if it will bring forth fruit, but if it doth not, then sayes, cut it downe.

There are certaintimes wherein the Lord by affliction, shewes himselfe (as it were) to a man, makes apparitions, so as a man may grope after him and feele him, and take notice what hee would have. If such passe away, and no good is done, it is

no preface of health, as is that sicknesse which comes by physicke, but of destruction; 'tis but as a drop of wrath fore-running the great storme, a cracke fore-running the ruine of the whole building. Seeke not therefore in distresse, so much to have the crosse removed, as the sinne, *James 1. Rejoyce*, saies the Apostle, *when you fall into sundry tentations*; which he would not have said, if healing the sinne had not beene the greater mercy, than the induring the affliction is grievous and dolorous; and if thou hast an affliction on thee, say, 'tis best, I will be content to indure it still, for God means me good by it: on the contrary, if thou lashest out, and yet art in health and prosperity, &c. and thy sinnes still continue, but thou art not afflicted, and God suffers thee to thrive in sinne; it is a signe God will destroy thee, that he leaves thee wast as a vineyard, to bee over-growne with briars and thornes.

And the last doctrine is,

Doct. 3. That, *take away the sinne, the crosse will surely follow, and be taken away also*: either it, or the sting of it; so as it shall be as good as no crosse. An affliction consists not in the bulke of it, but in the burthen. What is a serpent without a sting? what is a great bulk, if it have no waight? God can so fashion the heart, as that it shall not feelee the burden of it.

Reas. 1. 1. Because crosses do come for sinne. Indeed, some are not for sinne, but for triall, for the confirmation of the Gospell; some for the glory of God,

God, as that blindness in the blind man; some for triall onely, as *Abrahams* offering up his sonne, yet for the most part they come from sinne.

2. God never afflicts but for our profit: so says the Apostle, *Heb. 12. Our fathers after the flesh corrected us*, not alwayes for our profit, but they out of passion oftentimes; but, *He for our profit*: Now when he hath thereby made us partakers of his holinesse, and so we have ceased from sinne, then he will cease to afflict.

Reas. 2.

It was otherwise (you will say) with *David*: his sinne was forgiven, as *Nathan* told him, and yet the crosse was not removed, for *his child died*, and the sword departed not from his house.

Object.

There is an exception in these two cases.

1. Of scandall, when the name of God is blasphemed: then though he forgive the sinne, yet he may go on to punish for his names sake.

Answe.

2. When we are not thoroughly humbled: for there may be true repentance, when our lusts are not enough mortified: God doth it, that the heart may be the more cleansed. Thus *David Psal. 51.* cries out of his *broken bones*, and why? his heart (he sayes) was not cleansed, and therefore he prayes for *a cleane heart and a right spirit*.

This affords matter of comfort. When any judgement is upon us, we are apt to thinke we shall never be rid of it: but if thou canst get but thy heart humbled, and thy lusts mortified, God will take away the Crosse. It is our fault to say, when we are afflicted, that we shall never see better daies: why for is not God able to remove it? and if the

Use.

sinne be removed, he will be willing also. No man is in an hard case, but he that hath an hard heart: we are apt to think in all conditions, that what is at present, will alwaies continue; if we be in prosperity, we are apt to think as they in the Prophet, that *to morrow will be as to day, and much more abundant*; so if in affliction, to say also, that *as it is to day, it will be to morrow*, and so for ever. But know, that if you humble your selves, and turne from the evill wayes, God will take away the calamity. There is an excellent place for this, *1 Pet. 5. 6. Humble your selves under the mighty hand of God, and he shall exalt you in due time.* When a man is humbled by God, let him humble himselfe, and then God will exalt him; that is the due time, and he will not stay one jot longer. And that which I say of present affliction, I say also of crosses for the future, which you may feare, that your sinnes will bring; That if you humble your selves, and turne from your evill wayes, God will be mercifull to you, and heale you.

(* * *)

FINIS.

20226.2

THE
CHURCHES
MARRIAGE;

OR,

DIGNITIE:
DELIVERED IN SVNDRY
Sermons at *Lincolnes Inne*.

By the late learned and reverend Divine,
IOHN PRESTON,

Dr. in Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinary to His Majesty,
Mr. of *Emanuel Colledge in Cambridge*, and
sometime Preacher at *Lincolnes Inne*.

HO s. 2. 19.

*I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me
in righteousness, and in judgement, and in loving kindnesse, and in
mercies.*

ISA. 54. 5.

For thy maker is thy husband; the Lord of hosts is his name.

LONDON,

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THE
CHURCHES

MARRIAGE

REGISTER

RECEIVED

By the late Hon. and Rev. Mr. D.

JOHN

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1801

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THE CHVRCHES MARRIAGE.

EPHES. 5.32.

*This is a great myserie, but I speake concerning Christ
and concerning the Church.*



THE point out of these words is this, that,
There is a match between Christ and the Church: and consequently, betweene Christ and every particular man that is a member of the true body of Christ; this is the great Myserie the Apostle tells us of in this place. To open which, let us consider wherein this match consisteth, what similitude it hath with the ordinary marriage which is betweene a man and his wife here upon earth, it consisteth in these five things.

A a

First,

First, as in marriage there must be consent of the parents, so here, the Father hath given his Sonne to us, and likewise hee hath given us to the Sonne wherein wee are to consider the great mercy of God that hee would bestow his Owne Sonne upon us, which is the reason why the Apostle saith in *Ephes. 1. Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ, that hath blessed us with all spirituall blessings in heavenly things in Christ, that is, that hath given us his owne Sonne, and with him all things else, and Him likewise for us, when wee were cast away men. That thus he should give us to his Sonne, and match us with him, that is the first thing.*

2

The second thing in marriage, is the mutuall consent of the parties themselves that are to match together, wherein we are in the first place to consider, the consent of the Sonne, *the Husband*, because we know that the man is the suitor, he begins, and if hee had not, who could have knowne the mind of the *Lord Iesus*, that he would match so lowe, that he would match with sinfull dust and ashes, except himselfe had declared it, his Church seekes not first to him, not because modesty forbids it, but because she knew no such thing, that there was such an Husband for her; she indeed had most need to seeke, because shee stood in need of such an Husband, Christ matches with her, not for any need he had of a wife, but onely for the need his wife had of him. Now his Father from eternity had ordained this Wife for his Sonne, and therefore hee must have her, and

The Churches Marriage.

3

and he could have no other. Therefore, first see if the Sonne be willing, for this he hath declared it plainly in his Word, *We are Ambassadors*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 5. *beseeking you in Christs stead, to be reconciled to God*, and in *Matth. 22.* you see, *all were invited to the Marriage*, and all those speeches; *Goe preach the Gospell to every creature under heaven*, and *Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden*: and that in *Rev. 22.* *Let whosoever will come*; this I say, declares the consent of the Son that he is willing.

2 Cor. 5.
Matth. 22.

Revel. 22.

Now, secondly for our consent, we have that wrought by the holy Ghost, by a double worke.

One is a worke of the holy Ghost, discovering to us the thraldome, and bondage, the death and danger wherein we are, and also discovering to us our owne sinfulness, which is necessary, because a man is ready to be conceited of himselfe, and so is somewhat coy, and unwilling to yeeld to the suit of Christ, but when the holy Ghost hath shewed a man what he is, that he is such a one as he never thought himselfe to be, hee then begins to thinke, that hee is unworthy that the Lord should vouchsafe him so much favour; hee is ready to say as *Abigaile* said to *David*, when she was spoken to, to be his wife, Lord what am I that thou shouldest so farre respect me? *Let thy hand-maid wash the feet of my Lords servants*, I am worthy of no better office; I say this is one worke of the holy Ghost, thus to prepare us to this match.

The other is to present Christ unto us, and to fit him above all the world for us in our apprehen-

20226 a

sions, which is done by the work of the holy Ghost manifesting Christ, and his beauty, when Christ comes to joyne our love, hee is faine to use his skill to joyne us: and all that wee can doe to see him at, is nothing, except the holy Ghost shew you Jesus Christ, and except withall, hee make a secret impression upon the heart, except there be a secret instinct wrought in us, causing us to long after Christ, we shall never bring our hearts to consent to this Marriage. Now therefore, as there goes a secret vertue from the Load-stone, that makes a secret impression upon the iron, and when that is done, the iron rests not, but drawes neare to the Load-stone, so the holy Ghost that is sent from the Father, makes an impression upon our spirits, that wee have no rest till wee obtaine Christ. This is called in Scripture, a *Drawing to Christ*; *None comes to me except the Father draw him*, that is, except the Father worke powerfully upon him, and make him willing to come: for that is the meaning of drawing, when the Lord turns as it were the will of a Lion, makes him a Lamb, when he gives another will.

3

This consent must not be mentall onely, kept within the breast, but there must be an expression of this consent, and it is in a mutuall covenant; so then the third thing is the *Covenant* betweene Christ and us, which is an everlasting covenant on both sides, an everlasting covenant on Christs part to be ours, to bestow himselfe on us and all that is his, whether salvation, remission of sinnes, sanctification, glory, his death, obedience, all he

The Churches Marriage.

5

he did oris, all is ours : and againe, a covenant on our part, to give up our selves to him, and this for ever, and all that is ours : as our finnes are made his, so all the good we receive from him, we promise to imploy to his service. Now, this is but as the *Espousals*.

The fourth is that *union* that followes upon this, and the solemne celebration of the Marriage which is done in baptisme, when you were asked this question, even as it is in ordinary marriage, Will you have this man to your wedded husband, will you take him for better and for worse, will you be content to renounce all others and to be alone to him, to serve and obey him ? so in Baptisme it was ask't, Will you be content to deny ungodlinesse, and worldly lusts, to renounce the world, the flesh and the Devill, &c. When men were of riper yeeres and converted, this was answered to by word of mouth from the party himselfe, and now when you are baptized young, it is even as it is in marriages which are made when the parties are under-age, which when they come to age they use not to disavow, but are obliged to confirme it : of that force is Baptisme unto us. This I say, is the solemnizing as it were of the nuptials betweene Christ and us, when we are baptized into his Name, when wee leave the former name that wee had before as a wife doth ; wee forsake father and mother and cleave to him, so that a man is no more *Sui juris*, but is given up to this Husband, to live after his will, to be subject to him in all things, and take

202262

The Churches Marriage.

him even as he taketh us; he takes us to keepe us in sicknesse and in health, not to cast us off, notwithstanding our infirmities, but to keepe to us and communicate himselfe alone to us, and not to reprobate men cast off; so wee take him with all crosses and afflictions, that attend the profession of him, to follow him through thicke and thinne, as well in adversity as in prosperity, and to keepe the soule chaste to him, and not to prostitute it to any lust or any creature.

The last, is the consequents of this Marriage and union, we have part in his goods, whatsoever is his, is ours, and ours is made his, our debts are made his, and againe, all his honours and riches, and priviledges are made ours, there is an union betweene the parties, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*, and then we have interest in all that is his.

Wee come now to apply this, and make some use of it.

First, if there be such a match, betweene Christ and every beleever, so that no man is partaker of any thing that is Christs, except he hath him first; then take heed of applying the benefits of Christ preposterously to thy selfe, for except thou have him first, it is but a vaine conceit to thinke any thing of his belongs to thee, to thinke of remission of sinnes and adoption, and all the priviledges, and to apply them to thy selfe, and to think when thou art but once perswaded of it, to thinke so, that they are presently thine, I say, this is but a meare dreame and conceit, except thou be married to Christ, that thou have the
Lord

The Churches Marriage.

7

Lord himselfe, thou hast nothing to doe with any thing that is his, *He that hath the Sonne hath life*, and all things pertaining to life and Godlinesse, but hee *that hath not the Sonne*, hath nothing, neither *life*, nor any thing else. Therefore that you be not deceived, you must look on this as the ground of all your comfort, am I married to Christ? Is the match made betweene me and him? if it bee not, know that whatsoever thou thinkest of forgiveness of sinnes, of any blessing, spirituall or temporall that it is thine, thou dost but deceive thy selfe therein with vaine words, it is not thy perswasion that makes the match, this is a point of great weight, therefore examine thy selfe strictly herein.

You will say, how shall I know it?

I answer, you shall know it by this.

Quest.
Answ.

First, consider whether thou have the consent of the Son: for that is the first thing, as was said, thou must consider, whether the Sonne have given his consent or no: Now it is true that in the word he hath declared his consent, but dost thou beleieve that? hast thou applied this word to thy self? there are two things which beare record with the Sonne that he is willing to match with us, and that is the Word and the Spirit: and consider if both have come home to thy heart yea or no, to testifie this.

First, I say, Christ he hath declared his will to match with us in his word: for though there bee no particular promise to *Iohn* or *Thomas*, or to any particular man, to say *Christ* is willing to marry

202262

thee, yet there is the generall that includes the particular, as we find the substance of this generall, *All that receive him shall bee saved*; then sayes the Soule, but I am one that am contained under this generall, this generall speakes to me as well, and that as surely and as certainly, as if a Messenger were sent from heaven to assure me that the Son is willing to match with me, for thou must looke what ground thy faith hath had, whether thou didst find such a word as this, and whether thou canst apply it to thy selfe, and hast laid hold upon it, and by resting on it, hast put thy scale to it, that God is true in such a speech as this: For you must know my beloved, that Faith must have a word, that is the proper object of Faith, for if Faith had nothing else for its object but a persuasion, or fancy of our owne, faith were but a weak thing, for it would alter according to the object and ground upon which it is pitched: now a mans owne opinion it is changeable, and mutable, but therefore we are said to be *rooted and grounded in faith* because it hath a sure foundation, there is a rocke for faith to be built on, which the gates of Hell cannot prevaile against: now the rock upon which faith is built, it is the word of God, so that that faith, wherby thou beleevest thou art justified, that thou art grafted into Christ, that thou art matched with him, that he is become thy Husband, I say even that faith of thine must have a word of God to be grounded upon, thou must find something in the Word that must testifie to thee that Christ is willing to match with thee, for you know there is

The Churches Marriage. 9

no match without mutuall consent, and therefore the first thing when thou comdest to bee married to him, is to know, that there is such a match, and that the Sonne is willing to match with thee.

Now how should any man in the world know that, except he declare himselfe? and how canst thou know he hath declared it, but from some word, from somewhat that he hath revealed in the Scripture, to which all those places that I named before doe serve, *Goe preach the Gospell to every creature under heaven, and Come unto me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, &c.* and wee are Ambassadors beseeching you to be reconciled. These and the like are the sure Word of God upon which thy faith must be grounded, so that thou comdest to say thus to thy selfe, well, whatsoever come of it, I am sure *there is a corner stone, on which whosoever is built, shall not be ashamed nor deceived*, I am sure of it from a word that the Lord hath confirmed with a seale, and with an oath, and therefore I rest upon it. And it is not a bare word, that Christ hath given to assure us of this, which is a signe it is a hard thing for us to beleieve it, it is no easy thing, for there is added to the word a seale, and it is confirmed with an oath, so then that is the first thing thou art to consider, whether thy faith hath beene pitcht upon som such word, and whether thou hast applied that word to thy selfe or no.

In the next place beside this word, there is a witnesse from the spirit, there is a wondrous work of the Holy Ghost, which saith to a mans heart, *bee of good comfort, feare not, I am thy salvation.* If you say

202262

say to me what needs the witnesse of the spirit? is not the word enough? if Christ declare himselfe so farre that in plaine tearmes hee is willing to match with us, what need the speciall witnesse of the Holy Ghost?

Ans. I answer, there is very great need of it, because the Word of it selfe is not able to comfort, and quicken and releve us, it is not able to beget in us peace, and joy, and righteousness, but it is even like a dead letter, it is a cold dead thing, able to doe nothing with the heart of man without the Spirit, this we find by experience, the clearest arguments, and the most comfortable that the scripture useth to comfort a man in distresse that hath his Conscience troubled with the apprehension of his sin, and of Gods wrath, they are all nothing till it please God to send his owne Spirit to beare witnesse to a mans spirit.

Quest. You will say, what is this witnesse of the Spirit?

Ans. I answer, it is a certaine divine expression of Christ to the soule, whereby a man is secretly assured without any argument or reason, that he is his salvation: for you must know, that there are indeed two things besides that confirme this truth to us, that is, the ground wee have in the Word, and the effects and fruits of sanctification, but both these doe it by way of argument; for when a man argueth thus, I see this generall proposition, *All that believe shall be saved*, but I am one that believe, therefore I am one that am contained under the generall pardon; this I say, is

is by way of argument. So againe, I finde in my selfe the fruits and effects of sanctification, and I am sure none are sanctified, but they are also justified, and they have received the Spirit of Christ, therefore I know I am one that belongs to him, all this is but the witnesse of our owne spirits, for these are but collections, that our owne spirits gather as a conclusion from the premisses, but now the witnesse of the Spirit, the witnesse of the holy Ghost, it is a distinct thing from this, therefore *Rom. 8. 16.* it is said, *to witnesse together with our spirits*, and therefore is a distinct witnesse from our spirits, that indeed witnesseth the same things, but the witnesse is distinct from that of our owne spirit, and that is without any argument or reason at all, being a secret manifestation made to the soule, whereby we are comforted and assured, that our sinnes are forgiven, and that Christ is willing to match with us. Now consider if thou wouldest know whether thou be one that is matched with Jesus Christ, whether thou have this double witnesse or no, of the Word and of the Spirit.

You will say, hath every one this secret testimonie?

Quest.

I answer, that every one hath it in some degree, more or lesse, for that same in *Ro. 8. 16.* *The Spirit witnesseth with our spirits*, is a general proposition, it concernes all beleevers, even with every mans spirit, the holy Ghost beares witnesse, but then we must take the words in the right sense; It is true, in some the Spirit speaks more evidently and audibly,

Answ.

202262

bly, with joy unspeakeable and glorious, the flashes of comfort are much more bright and glorious to some then to others, and such speciall witnesses of the holy Ghost are very rare, and dispensed to us for some speciall purposes, commonly after some great humiliation or prayer, or to prepare us for some great enterprise, or some speciall conflict, they are even as the apparitions to *Abraham*, and *Iacob*, and *Paul*, were, *Acts* 23. 11. *Be of good courage Paul, thou must beare witnesse of me at Rome, &c.* so when he was at Corinth, *Paul* be of good comfort; I am with thee. *Act.* 18. 9. All these were on speciall occasions: so I say there are some speciall witnesses of the holy Ghost, when the holy Ghost speaks evidently, and these are dispensed to us according to the good pleasure of God, and commonly it is added for some speciall purpose: now I say, not that every one hath this kind of testimony, but every one hath so much witness from the holy Ghost as doth uphold his spirit, that Christ is willing to match with him, that he hath or may have interest in him, and in all the priviledges of his death; this I say, every one hath more or lesse, although those speciall degrees of the evident speaking of the holy Ghost, are dispensed but to some, and to those that have it but for a speciall time: this is the first thing.

The second thing thou art to enquire into (if thou wouldest know if there be any such match, betweene Christ Jesus and thee,) what thy owne consent hath beene and is, which herein is not in words

words onely, but is given then, when thy heart and affections doe, or can make this answer, that thou art willing to match with the Lord Jesus, & this I give as a signe to examine thy heart by; for it is not in the power of any man living to bring his heart to this consent, nor is any creature able to doe it, you may as well bring fire and water to agree together, as to bring the heart of a naturall man to be willing to match with the Lord, but it is a speciall worke of the holy Ghost, that must mould the spirit a new, and breake all in pieces, and cast thee into a new frame, that must make thee willing to come into so neare a Communion with the Lord Jesus, for our spirits are quite contrary to it.

Onely concerning this, take this caution, that it is not so much what thou art willing to say in any case or condition, for it may be a man may be willing sometimes to match out of feare, or hope, or out of some by respect, I say, he may be willing to doe any thing; and to be married to Jesus Christ, but it is another thing when a man can say, that it is the inward bent of his will, to have it done, it is the bent of his inward affection, the streame of them runnes that way, this must be wrought by the holy Ghost. And take heed thou be not deceived in it, for there are many unsound and false conceits, some there are that are willing to match with Jesus Christ, when they are in extremity, when they are on their death-bed, when they know not how to shift for themselves, but alas, such a consent is farre off from

from being a right consent, there is no freedom in this consent, that contract that is made thorough threatning, it is but a compelled and constrained consent, this is not that which thou canst ground on, and yet this is a frequent thing, when men are in straits, that they know not what to do, then they are willing to match with Christ. Besides it may be a man is willing to match with Jesus Christ for a time, to serve him for a fit, for a moneth or a yeere, but art thou willing to make an everlasting Covenant with him, you know that such a Covenant is required in Marriage, that women give up themselves to their husbands so long as they live together. Now ordinarily when a man considers this seriously, What, must I forsake my pleasure for ever? must I live to Jesus Christ, and no more to my selfe? must I bestow all my time upon him, and have no more liberty? here a man makes a stand, he is not willing to make such a Covenant with him, such an everlasting Covenant; therefore consider whether thy consent be for perpetuity. Moreover, it may be thou art willing to match with him in some good mood, when thou art in a good fit, but that may be but a flash. There are many that for a fit in some good mood, when their hearts are wrought on, by some powerfull preaching of the Word, or some transcient action of the holy Ghost they are willing to match with Jesus Christ, but this holds not.

Besides againe, many are willing to match with Christ hereafter, but they are not content to doe

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it for the present, but you know it is essentiall to the Marriage Covenant, that it be *in verbis de presenti*, for the present, that is, I doe take this man for my wedded husband, &c. not that I promise I will, but that I am willing at this time, to give up my selfe to him, this present refining of ones selfe; this is the consent that makes the Marriage. But that we may shew all these false consents, I will runne thōrow them briefly.

First, there is in some an error concerning the person, when men are ready to take Jesus Christ, and yet doe not conceive aright of him. Whereas the Lord hath dealt plainly with us, as if hee meant not to circumvent us, and tells every man afore-hand, that if hee will match with him, hee must make account to take up his Crosse, and deny himselfe, he must make account to be wholly to him. Now, when a man lookes on Christ, and conceives him under another notion, and thinke he shall live at other kinde of life more free and loose, and thinkes this strictnesse is not required at his hands by Christ, now there is an error in the person, and that makes the Marriage frustrate; therefore take heed you be not deceived in this, for thou must know this, that when thou art once married to the Lord, then thy will must be subject to his will, thou must be content to obey him in all things, thou must be content to forgoe all, and refine up thy selfe to him, and live no longer to thy selfe but to him.

Yet, there is another error, that commonly runnes along with mens consent when it is not right,

right, which is, when a man is not willing to take the Lord alone, but joyne others with him, when a man will so match with Jesus Christ, that he seekes other things too, when he will seek honours with him, and seek wealth, and seek the pleasures of this world. Now, if thou match with Christ, know this, that thou must be content with him alone, thou must not joyne pleasures, and Christ together, thou must not joyne covetousnesse, and him together, thou must not seek praise with men, and thinke to match with Jesus Christ, thou must be content to be divorced from all other things and be to him alone, and take heed, that this deceive thee not.

And lastly consider, whether this consent that thou give, be a perfect consent; for there is a certaine imperfect consent that deceives many, when a man hath (as I may so speake) a kind of wambling that way, but it doth not boyle up to that full height of resolution, when a man makes some kind of offer, he makes well towards it, but he doth not fully resolve to match with the Lord Jesus, and this is that, that excludes many from this match, that, though they have a kinde of willingnesse and velleity, yet it doth not come to a fixed, solid, peremptory resolution. Now, you must know this, that whosoever matcheth with Jesus Christ, must be so fully resolved, that he must be shooke off againe with nothing: this resolution when it is imperfect and by halves, when thou doubtst whether thou shouldest doe it or no, this is a consent that is not accepted, all
this

this while there is an errour on thy part, this is the second thing to be considered, as thou must consider whether thou beleevest the consent of Jesus Christ, so I say in the second place, if thou wouldest know whether there be a match betweene Jesus Christ and thee, consider what thy owne consent is, and take heed thou be not deceived in it.

Thirdly, to know whether there be a match betweene the Lord and thee, consider whether there be an union made betweene you and him: now, this union with Christ, it is not meereely a relative union, such as is betweene husbands and wives, but besides this, there is a reall union, when Christ sends his Spirit into the heart: therefore thou must consider, whether thou have the Spirit of thy Husband dwelling in thee or no, for except thou have the holy Ghost to dwell in thy heart, it is impossible that there should be any match, for there will be alwayes jarres and dissentions betweene you, when thou hast the same Spirit, then there is the same will, the same desires, you love and hate the same things; therefore in considering, whether there be a match or no, this is a great thing, it will not deceive you, consider whether thou have the Spirit of thy husband. I find that the Apostle in all his Epistles, he takes this as the sure argument to perswade himselfe and others, that they were grafted into Christ, that they had received the earnest of the Spirit, I need not name to you particular places, they are so exceeding frequent. *If*

any man have not the Spirit of Christ, hee is not his. Rom. 8. but if you have the Spirit, you are sure you have the Sonne. Consider therefore, whether you have this Spirit in you or no, whether thou walke according to the Spirit or the flesh, guided and led by the Spirit of Christ in all, for that is the way to know if thou have the Spirit. A man may walke after the vanitie of his owne heart, A man may walke after the vanity of his owne mind, when yet he hath some good motions and good desires; so that if thou wouldest try thy selfe, whether thou hast the holy Ghost, the Spirit of thy Husband, thou shalt find it by thy constant course, as you have it, *Gal. 5. If you have the spirit, live in the Spirit,* that is, consider what thine ordinary course is, whether thou be guided by the Holy Ghost or no.

To know whether this spirit dwell in us or no, we must not take it upon conceit and fancy, but you shall find it by reall and sure effects. If you have the spirit, he will be as fire in you, *I will Baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,* that is, the Holy Ghost shall be as fire; now the nature of fire is, to discover it selfe were it is. If the Spirit be in thee, he will be as the Pilot in the ship, Hee will direct thy course, and build up the kingdome of Christ in thy heart, that is the third thing, consider whether thou have the Spirit of the Sonne.

Fourthly, if thou wouldest know whether Christ have matched with thee, then be sure of this, that *he hath washed thee from thy filthinesse,* looke to that that as another mark wherby thou maist discern

it: For though Iesus Christ marry thee when thou art in thy bloud, yet when thou art married once, he suffers thee not to continue so; but he will clense and wash thee from it, as we see in this Chapter, the Apostle exhorts *Husbands to love their wives, as Christ loved the Church, and gave himselfe for it, that he might sanctifie, and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himselfe a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing. but that it should bee holy without blemish*; marke it, when Christ hath married thee, his end is, to present thee pure, to wash thee. Now consider whether thou find thy selfe cleansed from thy filthinesse, and from all filthinesse, for when he washeth any, hee washeth them from top to toe, though not fully in respect of degrees, yet he suffers not any spot or wrinkle, to remaine constantly upon them. For the meaning is, not that this washing is perfected suddenly, but when we come to heaven, there shal not be the least wrinkle at all: but notwithstanding he so washeth them here, that there is no spot remains, that is, they allow not themselves in any sinne, that they wallow not in any puddle, he so clenseth them from every sinne, that it doth not abide there, a beleever is still purifying himselfe, though he be still defiled; therefore consider with thy selfe, whether Christ have thus clensed thee from al pollution of flesh and spirit. Beside in this washing, he doth not onely clense thee from all outward defilements, but he will wash thee from thy filthy nature, not onely from the outward

The Churches Marriage.

staynes, but from that swinish nature : for though a Swine be washed cleane, if shee retaine her nature, she will be ready to fall into the next puddle she meets with ; but now when Christ washeth his Church, he washeth them from the filthinesse of their nature, even every man whom hee washeth : Therefore consider if thou find this purifying of the Holy Ghost or no ; for whosoever is washed by Christ, there is a certaine simplicity and plainnesse of heart, that though he fall into sinne, yet his heart is upright with Christ, as wee see in 2. Cor. 11. 3. 4. *I am iealous over you with a godly iealousy, for I have prepared you for one husband, to present you a pure Virgin to Christ, I feare least as the serpent beguiled Eve, so your minds should bee corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.* Marke, the Apostle speakes of the Church, as it is in this life, *my endeavour is to present you as a Virgin*, what is that ? that you bee not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ, but that you may have a plaine heart, that hath no deceit, that there be not a double mind. Christ so farre clenseth, that the heart is upright in every thing, therefore by that thou shalt know whether thou bee washed or no, for though Iesus Christ marry us when we are Ethiopians, yet when he hath married us, he puts a beauty upon us. Consider whether this beauty be put on thee or no, whether thou bee so washed from thy filthinesse, that there doth a new beauty appeare, that that naturall blacknesse of thine bee removed throughout : indeed it is removed but in part for degrees, but yet there is a generall, throughout removing of it all over. Lastly,

Lastly, if thou wouldest know whether thou be matched or no with him, consider whether thou have *the wedding garment*. In *Matth. 22.* and *Luke 14.* you shall finde the parable of the King inviting men to the marriage of his sonne, and there are many that come, but one of them wanted a *wedding garment*: What is the meaning of that? many men come to the wedding for cheare, many for the benefit they might receive, or such by respects, because they would doe as others doe, because they might escape censure; many motives there might be to bring men to this marriage feast: but now to have the wedding garment, that is the tryall.

Now what is the wedding garment?

It is a wedding affection, it is to love the Bridegroome himselfe, his person, for wee are not onely guests, we are not so to understand it, but such guests as withall are married to the Sonne. Now he that comes to this wedding without a conjugall wedding affection, he comes without the wedding garment; therefore consider with thy selfe whether thou have that affection or no.

You will say, what is this marriage affection?

I answer, it is such an affection whereby a man pitches on Christ, he chuseth him *before all others*, as his Husband: the wedding affection, is such an affection, as when one prefers her husband before all others: Consider whether there be such an affection, that thou canst preferre Iesus Christ, before all things in the world besides.

Againe consider, whether thy affection be fix

Quest.
Ans. 1.

20226a

ed on his person: for the affection of an harlot may be towards her husbands goods, and toward the commodities and benefits by him; but art thou able to love the person of Iesus Christ, so as to delight in him, and desire his presence, and seekest him, so that thou carest not for any thing so thou maist have him? this is to have a wedding conjugall affection: but this is not all that makes the marriage garment.

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Consider besides what boldnesse thou hast in his presence, for *perfect love casts out feare*: now by perfect love, is not meant onely love in the perfection, that is growne to a height, (such wee shall not have, till wee come to heaven) but by perfect love is to be understood sincere love: therefore if thou wouldest know if thou have the wedding garment, whether this conjugall affection be wrought, thou shalt know it by the boldnes thou hast with thy husband: wilt thou say, thou art married to him, and yet darest not speake to him, but lookest on him, as on a Iudge, as a hard Master or a stranger? that thou darest not aske any thing of, or if thou dost, thou knowest not whether thou shalt obtaine it? there is a certaine boldnesse and familiarity goes along with this, is there such a disposition put into thy heart?

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Besides this is not all, there doe withall accompany this all spirituall graces, that cloathe thy soule, that doe alter the habit of it, for there is something understood in the similitude of a garment, as importing the very cloathing that the soule wears, when it hath another habit than it
had

had before. Now this cloathing is a party-coloured garment made of all the graces of the Spirit; therefore if thou wouldest know whether thou have this wedding garment or no, thou must looke to every grace, for the Image of God is nothing else, but the bundle and heape of all graces, as the old man, the image of Satan, and the first *Adam* is the heap of all corruptions; so this wedding garment, this Image of the new *Adam*, it is that which consists of all the graces, these must cloath thy soule.

And now beloved, when this is done, the second thing that we are to doe after this examination, is,

To perswade every man to be content to take Jesus Christ for his Husband. If already you be in Christ, we have no more to doe, but to exhort you, but to continue and intend that desire, and affection, and love to your Husband; but if upon this examination you finde you are yet strangers, I say the next use we are to make of it, is to bring your hearts to a willingnesse to match with him. Now to perswade you to this, I will pitch briefly on these three particulars.

Use 2.

First, consider whether thou be able to live without a husband or alone? The truth is, thou must marry of necessity, or thou art undone; for it is the case of every man which is said of the Captive woman in *Deut. 21.* when they had overcome a City, if there were a woman among them to whom they had a favour, they might marry her if they would, if she consented, she saved her

life by it. I say, that is the case of every man living, that when we were all exposed to death, Jesus Christ had a favour to us, and we must marry him or we dye for it. Now therefore when he shall be a suitor to thee, consider what thou hast to say, art thou able to live without him? art thou able to pay thy ransom? certainly thou art not able, and is it not then a madnesse in thee to refuse? Consider what is thy debt, and consider thou art bound to pay the utmost farthing which the Lord requires at thy hands: when a man considers seriously of this, that every idle word, every sinne of omission or that is committed is a debt, and stands upon his owne score, and that himselfe is not able to pay, this will make a man begin to looke about him. My beloved, all the afflictions, that wee have in this life, they are but a paying the use money required for the debt, the maine debt remaines intire, that must bee paid at that day, *the day of wrath, at the day of declaration of the just Iudgement of God*; therefore consider first thy debt, and withall consider thy poverty. 'Tis true, though thou wert in debt, if thou hadst somewhat to pay it, it were another matter. And indeed, many men are puffed up with a conceit, and thinke they have something to pay, and this is the case of all hypocrites, that thinke they have some good workes, they have done many good things, they come to Church duely, &c. But you must know that all this will not pay your debt, as it is *Revel. 3. I counsell thee to buy of me gold, that thou maiest be rich.*

Till

Till a man hath a husband, till hee have Jesus Christ, all the workes he doth are little worth.

I, but though a man be in debt, and have not apenny to pay his debt, yet there is usually a time given, a man is not cast presently into prison.

I answer, though thou be not, yet thou art in danger all the time; and it is a miserable thing to live in another mans danger, to be in danger of an enemy, when a man shall have many writs out against him, and knowes not when the Serjeant will seize upon him; I say; put the case he be not arrested, yet he is in continuall feare; this is thy case before thou be under this covert, before thou be matched to this thy husband Christ: when thou hast him, thou art safe, but in the meane time thou art in continuall feare. As *Heb. 2. 14.* it is given as a reason, *why Christ tooke part with the children, that he might deliver them, that for feare of death, were all their life long subject to bondage;* So that though a man be not cast into prison, hee is all his life time subject to bondage. Now if it were but to be delivered from this feare and bondage that every other man is in, it were a great motive to move us to this. I, but is there not some bayle, may not a man flee from this arrest?

I answer no, every man without Christ is like a woman that is friendlesse, that hath none to stand for her, that is destitute of wisdom, that hath no counsell to direct her. We are destitute of righteousness, we have none to speake for us,

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202262

we are destitute of sanctification, wee have none to cleanse us, from our leprosie; we are destitute of redemption; therefore you know it is said, *Iesus Christ is made Wisdome, Righteousnesse, Sanctification and Redemption*: which implies thus much, that till wee be married to him, we have neither wisdom, wee have no righteousness to speake for us, wee have none to cleanse us, wee have none to redeeme us; this is the first thing to move thee to it.

2 Secondly, when thou hast well pondered this first motive, that thou art not able to live alone without a husband, I say, consider secondly the excellencie of thy husband, who it is that is a suitor to thee. And here first looke on Christ himselfe, with all his Attributes, and how that the Lord himselfe will become thine, consider the infinite wisdom of Christ, his Almighty power, consider his eternity; consider whatsoever is in him, and thinke with thy selfe, that all this is in *Him*, who offers himselfe to be my husband, and all this shall be mine, all this is for my use, and advantage; this is a great motive to winne us to match with him, as you know in earthly marriages, the excellency of a husband, the parts that are in him, those that are inherent in his very person, is the greatest motive of all other: think therefore of all Christs excellencies, draw to your selves some *Idea* of him, and thinke all these are mine, for my use, as his wisdom to give me direction, his power and strength for my protection upon all occasions, whatsoever is in him

him is mine, hee himselfe is become my portion; this is a great motive to us.

Besides this, consider that thou hast not onely the person of Christ alone, with all his Attributes, but how much comes with him, which adde to this; as the immunity thou hast by marching with Christ, that when thou art once matched with him, thou art under covert, thy debts are paid, thou art out of all danger. My beloved, if it were but to be freed from those injuries, and wrongs that a woman is subject unto, from potent enemies that are able to hurt her upon all occasions, you know it is a great motive to move her to match. Now Jesus Christ frees us from all those great enemies of our salvation, as it is *Luke 1. 74. That being delivered from the hands of all our enemies, wee might serve him in holinesse and righteousness all the dayes of our lives.* This we have by him, that when Satan shall come to us, and arrest us, wee may say to him, I am now under covert, thou must goe to my husband, he is bound to pay my debts. My beloved, we consider not what a benefit this is, what it is to have Jesus Christ at such a time, when you come to dye, when you shall be arrested by death; now to have the Lord Jesus to undertake all your debts, now to be under covert it is a great matter; as you know (to expresse it to you a little what it is,) *Judas* when hee had committed that great sinne, he was indited and arrested, he had none to flee to; *Peter* when he had committed a sinne, hee had a covert to goe to, and you all know the difference

202262

ference that was between their conditions in the events upon both; *Saul* and *David* if you looke on them in their distresse, *David* had a covert to goe to when he was in distresse, (for I speake not now of the debt of sinne, but of all calamities in which you shall have a husband to be a refuge for you,) I say, *David* when hee was in distresse upon any occasion, when his Citty was burned and his wifes taken, hee had a covert to fly to; but when *Saul* was in distresse, hee had none, he went to the Lord, but he had no answer. I say, it is a great matter to consider this, that we have a covert, that when the Lord shall raine downe fire and brimstone upon us, when there is no rock to shelter us, now for Jesus Christ to be a covert to us. We know the Egyptians when they were in that deadly storme of hayle, the Israelites were in their houses under covert, and look't out, and saw the danger they were in, and they then knew the benefit what it was to be under shelter: such is the condition of all those that are in Christ.

Besides this immunity, consider all those great priviledges that doe come by him, for this is not all; but when you have matched with him, he will make you rich, hee will make you heires of all things, all the precious promises belong to you, which it may be you reckon a small matter; but the promises of God are most precious, and will make one rich, as you know a man that hath nothing but bills and bonds, and evidences, may be very rich, though he have not a penny by him; so to have all the promises belong to us: now as
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soone as wee are in Christ, there is not a promise in all the booke of God, but it belongs to us; that is the misery of another man that is not in Christ, there is not one promise his. Therefore till thou have him, thou hast nothing.

3

And besides the hope of the promises, consider vvhhat you have for the present, vvhhat dowry he brings vvvith him, in 1 Cor. 3. *wherefore let no man rejoyce in men; for all things are yours, whether it be Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, &c.* all is yours, and you are Christs. Marke, here is the expression of that dowry, that Christ brings with him an Inventory of the wealth of a Christian, faith he, when once you are matched to Christ, all that is his belongs to you; *Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas*, all his Servants, all are bestowed on you, to wait upon the Spouse, as it were; he hath given all to you, all those gifts are bestowed on them for your sakes: besides, *the world is yours*, that is, as farre as it is good for you, the world and all things in the world are so a Christians; though he have but little of it, yet indeed the world is his; other men are the worlds: if wee speake properly, the world is not said to be any mans, but onely a Christians; for his use, he is the master of it. Indeed, whilest a man is in his minority, (you know the heire doth not possesse his goods, because it is the time of his education, so) it may be thou hast not full possession: It is dispensed to thee as the Lord sees meete, because it is the time of thy nurture and education, thou art in thy minority, but yet *the world* is thine. Then he goes on, *life or death,*

202262

death, that is, all this life is bestowed on a Christian for his advantage: to another man it is not so; the longer hee lives, it is the worse for him, he hath the further reckoning; it doth but make his sinne ripe, and but lay up a treasure of wrath for him; so that all a mans life long, hee doth but gather sticks to make a fire to consume him at the last day. But now in the portion of a Christian, this is one thing, that Jesus Christ bestows upon him, that all his life is for his advantage; all the good workes he doth, all those shall be remembered, all those shall goe along with him, and bring a sure reward; and then not onely life is his, but death is also. My beloved, it is a strange thing, that this should be reckoned among the dowries, and commodities, and priviledges that Christs bestowes on his Spouse, to bring death with him; yet this is a great priviledge, that hee bestowes death on us; for what were the condition of a Christian if death were not? were it not the most miserable of all other? for if there were no death, there should be no Resurrection; therefore death must needs be a very great advantage: it is that, that makes way for us, to deliver us out of all the miseries of this life, and to give us possession of that everlasting Kingdome that is provided for us, *whether they be things present, or things to come*, that is, all that belong to this present life, and not onely those, but those that belong to the life to come, all those are yours: this is that we have by Christ.

And lastly consider, how faire a life you shall live

live with him, in what plenty; that there is nothing that your heart can desire, but you shall have it? In that security, that you need feare no enemy; whereas other men have a thousand feares, a Christian hath this benefit, hee makes the Lord his dread, that he need feare nothing; but he is delivered from the hands of all his enemies. Consider with what contentment thou shalt live, that thou hast such a husband that is an adequate object (that I may so say) that shall fill thy soule, that when thou hast him, thou needest not thirst after any thing besides. That is the great benefit that is promised, that thou shalt *Thirst no more*, that is, when a man is married to the Lord Jesus, he is so filled and satisfied with contentment, that he lets all other things goe: if hee have them so it is; if he want them, it is no great matter: he hath one that is contentment enough to him, he hath one that is in stead of all.

But you will say, if I have this husband, I must live in subjection to him; our wills must be subject to his will; our liberty must be taken from us.

Object.

My beloved, what if it be? you must consider what kind of subjection it is, it is such a subjection as whereby the members are subject to the head: now doe you think it any burthen, for the members to be subject, and to be ruled by the head, it is a naturall subjection, that is, such a subjection as is convenient for you; therefore if you complaine, you have lost your liberty, know it is quite contrary when you have matched
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Answ.

202262

with Christ, now you are delivered from bondage and set at liberty.

Obiect.

I, but you will say, it is a pleasant thing for a man to doe what he will; liberty is a sweet thing, and to part with this, and now to live under a husband, it is a hard case.

Answ.

For this my beloved I beseech you consider, that it is true, for a man to live as he will, if his will bee right, it is a great benefit; but for a Franticke man to doe what hee will, for a man whose will is set upon things hurtfull to himselfe, for such a man to have his will, it were better he were restrained: and this is the case of every man till hee be matched with the Lord Jesus: therefore that you may know what this liberty is, wee will put you but this case; you must know that every man is marryed to one of these two husbands, either hee is subject to the law of righteousness, or to the law of sinne; either hee is in bondage to the flesh or to the spirit, either he is subject to Christ, or else hee is subject to Satan. Now consider which of these two thou wouldest choose, whether to be subject to the law of sinne, or to Christ: and that you may know which to choose, I will expresse it to you by this; It is as when a sicke man lyes betweene the Physician and the disease, hee must needs be subject to one of them: the disease counsells him to doe one thing, the Physician another: now consider which of these two thou wouldest obey.

You will say, I would doe what I list, I would doe as my disease suggests to me, and would have

have me doe: That seemes easie for the present, but will not this increase thy bondage, and pay thee with death in the end? on the other side, if thou be content to be subject to the Physician, and have thy will subject to his, doth not this draw to liberty and restore health, and bring thee to life? therefore consider what a small objection that is, and consider withall, what you will chuse; for I say, every man must bee subject to one husband; and that you may see the difference of these husbands, consider that in *Rom. 7.* you shall finde there, that whosoever is not married to Christ, is subject to another husband, that is the Law. Know you not brethren, that the Law hath dominion over a man as long as hee liveth? for the woman that is subject to a man is bound by the Law to the man while he liveth, and if she take another man she shall be called an adulteresse: but if the man be dead, shee is freed from the Law, so that shee is not an adulteresse, though she take another man. This is but the similitude: but the meaning is, before ever a man be married to Christ, he is married to the Law, and he cannot be married to Christ Jesus, till hee be dead to the Law; and when hee is dead once to that, then he may be married to him. Now you shall see the reddition of this similitude: so you brethren are dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that you might be married to another, to him that was raised from the dead, that you might bring forth fruit unto God. For when you were in the flesh, the motions of sinne that are by the Law had force in your members to bring forth fruit unto death, &c. The meaning is this,

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202262

this, that till a man be matched to Jesus Christ, the Law of God, the morall Law that is written in every mans conscience, it rules there like a hard husband, a severe cruell husband, that sets a hard taske to doe, and gives no strength at all to doe it, and therefore it brings forth death: for when the Law commands a man to doe a thing, he hath no ability to performe it: and withall it doth signifie unto him, that if hee doe not performe it, he shall be cursed, this is to be subiect to the Law: and so a man lives in bondage all his time; so that whosoever is not married to Christ, he is all the while subiect to an evill conscience, to the Law that suggests what he should doe, with threatning him if not; and when conscience tells him, that he hath not performed it, it is a continuall vexation, a burthen and a griefe to him: but now when he is married to Christ, then he serves in *newnesse of spirit*, not in the *oldnesse of the letter*, as it followes there, that is, hee doth every thing freely, hee doth it out of choice, he doth that which his owne spirit carries him to; look what commandement he hath, he hath some ability to performe it.

2 Again, he serves a kind husband, that takes every thing in good part, that will not pay him with death, as his first husband doth. I say consider this, and let it be the second motive.

3 The third thing I wil conclude with, is, the danger of refusing him, wherein I thought to have bin large, but I can but touch it. I say consider this, that if thou refuse, it is the greatest sin that thou
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canst commit: for thou must know this, that when the Lord Iesus Christ shall become a suitor to thee, for thee then to refuse, thou provokest him to anger. I dare say, it goes beyond all the sins thou hast committed; for know this, he is not a bare suitor, but a suitor that hath paid deare for his wife; hee hath purchased thee at a deare price, with the shedding of his owne blood: so that if thou wilt not heare his suit, hee loseth not onely his labour in suing, but the price that he paid for thee, for the very blood of Iesus Christ shall bee put upon thy score. To have the Lord as suing to thee thus despised, you know *Rom. 2, 4, 6. Despising the patience of God, treasures up wrath against the day of wrath.* Now despising kindnesse is greater, And the contempt of it, doth more incense the Lord to anger. Now therefore when the Lord shall be a suitor to us, one would thinke we should rather be suitors to him: but when he shall condescend to be suitors to us, and be refused, think what a provocation it is; I wil give you but one instance, that you may know what it is to refuse this suit. The Iewes when Christ came in the flesh, it is said, *he came to his owne*, he made offer of himselfe, *but his owne received him not, but refused him*, they would none of him. *Iohn 1. he came to his owne, but his owne received him not*, you see how Christ tooke this at their hand, you see *for this the wrath of God is come upon them to the utmost.* Compare now all the sins of the Iewes, and al the punishments that were upon them before this time, they were nothing to this.

For first you see, that for sixteen hundred yeeres welnigh, the wrath of God hath layn on them; take the times of the Lords wrath formerly upon that nation, it may be for seventy yeeres or for forty yeeres, as in the time of the Iudges, and in the captivity of Babylon, what was that to this wrath?

Secondly, in those times, though they were in captivity, and were hardly used, yet the nation was still kept together, and restored againe; now they are scattered to all nations of the earth, so that this very sinne of the Iewes in refusing Iesus Christ, you see, how the Lord was offended with it, as the Apostle expresseth it, *the wrath of God is come upon them to the utmost*: marke it, for it is your owne case, that when we preach the Gospell, and offer Christ, we are the friends of the bridegroom: our businesse is, to present you as a pure Virgin to Christ, and when you will not heare but refuse, when we beseech you to be reconciled, you commit the same sin that the Iewes did, when they would not receive Christ: this is the case of every man that refuseth, you know those that were bid to the wedding; the text saith, *the King was exceeding angry*, and pronounced this, that not one that was bid should taste of the Supper: thus for a man to refuse, we know not what God will doe to that man: we cannot distinguish of the time: secret times belong to him: but for a man to refuse at any time, when hee is invited to come to Christ Iesus, either by the preaching of the word, or by the secret motions of the spirit, it is a dangerous

gerous thing. Who knowes whether ever thou shalt bee invited more? as you see when they refused, the Lord did not send the second time, but pronounced this peremptory conclusion, and sentence upon them, *Not a man that was invited should come.*

An objection may be made, which I will answer and so proceed, which is concerning these motives I have given, and that is, whether we may use such to our hearts, to move us to take Christ, as to consider the priviledges and liberty we shall have with him, for will some say, wee are bound to match with Christ meerly out of love to his person: how shall these be used as motives then?

These motives serve notwithstanding to two ends.

First they are a good introduction to lead us to the match: for when we make a tender of Christ, men will not harken to us; as many a woman will not heare of such a suitor; but when she is told, that he hath such an estate, that he will bring her to such an house, thus and thus furnished, that she shall have these and these commodities by him, it may be that will winne her thus farre as now to see him, shee is content now that he should come, and be a suitor, she is content to confer with him; So I say, this is that that brings every man first to looke after Christ Jesus, to admit him as it were, to be content to see his person, to give him leave to conferre with them; therefore that is one use to be made of them.

The second use of such motives is, when a man

Object.

Answ.

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202262

hath resolved on the match, it is a great helpe to make him the more willing. When a man or a woman hath resolved on this match, and withall considered these and these additions, I say they adde, they helpe well to his resolution: so that when respect to his person, hath once set the compasse, these considerations of punishment and reward they are good to fill the sayls and to carry the ship along, and to drive it to the haven, although still the principall motive bee a meere respect unto his person. I say that use these have, to bring us to look to Christ. But when once they have brought us to the knowledge of Christ, to be acquainted inwardly with him, now the heart of every man is to be content with him alone, though there be nothing beside, and indeed it is that which makes the match, onely these helps are good additions, these draw us on to make our consent and choyce, and willingnesse the more full, and perfect: but this but by the way, onely to answer that objection.

Now to come to the maine impediments that hinder men from Christ, it is worth all our consideration, to see what it is that keepes men off, which is not onely profitable to bring them in, that are yet strangers, but also to confirme those that are already entred into covenant with the Lord Iesus, and you shall find one of these three things keepe men off.

Some there are that never heard of the Lord Iesus, some there are that heare of such an offer but cannot beleve it, some againe that doe beleve it, yet

yet are not willing to live under him, but would live according to their liberty, they are not willing to change their condition, even as sometimes there is a Proclamation out for pardoning of Pirats, it may be there are many Pirates that never heard of this Proclamation, these cannot come in, they know it not, and this is the case of those to whom the Lord Iesus is not preached or remaine ignorant of him.

Secondly, there are some other Pirats, that hear of it, but they beleeeve it not, they thinke it is but a trap to get them in, they cannot beleeeve that those great rebellions that they have committed can be forgiven. There is a third sort that beleeeve it, that make no question but they shall be pardoned if they come, but they thinke it a better course to live by piracy still, rather than to come in under the law to live in subjection, they thinke they shall live a poorer life and be more restrained, they are not willing to change their condition. Now for the first of these, wee have nothing to doe with them, for we speake to none but those that have heard of the Proclamation, that know well enough there is such an offer made, therefore our busines is with the two second.

First I will begin with those that will not beleeeve, that there is such a pardon, that cannot thinke that the Lord Iesus is willing to match with them, this is a common case, many a man when he lookes on his rebellions, is ready to say, why; is it possible that I may bee admitted to match with the Lord Iesus? I that have a heart so

20226a

hard, such lusts? I that have committed such rebellions against him. Yes, whosoever thou art, I am bold to say to thee, (and thou must thinke it as true, as if Christ himself should speak from heaven, that if thou dost come in, thou shalt be received.

Oh! but is it possible that such a wretch as I am may be advanced & raised to such a degree of honour?

Yes it is most possible, the Lord Jesus may have a favour to thee, it is our message to come and tell thee so much, onely thou must doe as the captive woman in *Deut. 21*. when any had a favour to a woman that was taken captive, she must put off her old cloathes, she must put on new apparell, shee must be washed and purified, and pare her nailes, and so she must become his wife; so I say to thee, the Lord is willing to match with thee, onely thou must change thy rayment, thou must wash thee and pare thy nayles, &c. Therefore beloved, let none in this case be discouraged, as indeed wee are exceeding apt to be, and ready to doe in this case as *Gideon*, when the Angell appeared to him, and told him he should doe great matters, that hee should judge Israel, that hee should deliver them out of the hands of the *Midianites*, what saith *Gideon*? Lord (saith he) *What am I and my father? hee is one of the poorest in Manasses Tribe*, and I am the least in my fathers family, and is it possible that I should be raised to such honour? yes saith the Lord, it shall be done, I will confirme it, thou hast my word, and I will confirme it by miracle, as you know he did by the burning of the Sacrifice, and by the dew
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on the Fleece, when all the earth was drie. I say, the same is our case, when wee heare such a thing as this, that we shall be made **Queenes**, that wee shall match with **Christ**, when a man is little in his owne eyes, he wonders at it; I say, the Lord will make it good to thee, thou shalt have a word and a miracle to confirme it, for indeed beloved, it is a thing that needs a miracle, that the Sonne of God, the Lord Jesus, should come, and match with such wretches as we are.

You will say, where is this word?

You shall find it in *Rom. 4.5.* *He justifieth the ungodly*, I will take but that place onely, *Abraham beleevd in him that justifieth the ungodly, and his faith was accounted to him for righteousness*, that is, though thou be an ungodly man, though thou be a Pirate, a Rebell, it is no matter, the Lord will match with thee notwithstanding, and pay all thy debts and justifie thee; indeed after that, He will sanctifie thee, and change thy heart; but yet this is thy comfort, that though at present thou be ungodly, yet notwithstanding hee will match with thee. Beloved, this is a sure word, and this is our great consolation, that though wee be in our blood, yet then the Lord makes the match: indeed afterwards hee washeth and cleanseth us, therefore say not, I am blacke; and therefore the Lord can have no delight in me? and what can he see in me, to marry with me? for hee will marry with thee even then. Onely when he hath marryed thee, then he will change thy nature, he will change the skin of the Blacke-moore, then he will
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202262

put a new beauty on thee, this is thy comfort, that there is this difference, betweene the marriage of Christ, and the marriage among men, when wee come to match, wee must find beauty, first, some amiable thing in the party; but the Lord lookes on us, when wee are the most loathsome creatures in the world, and then he makes the match, and after hee puts that beauty on us, that may cause him to delight in us.

You will say, here is the word, but where is the miracle to confirme this?

I answer, this very word hath a miracle going along with it, and you shall see them put together in *Matth. 4. 23.* where you shall see the Lord Jesus when hee came to his owne, to make a tender of himselfe, in what manner he comes, saith the Text, hee went about preaching the Gospell of the Kingdome, that is, to tell men this good newes, that if they would match with him, they should have a Kingdome: here is the word, and see the miracle followes, hee went about preaching *the Gospell of the Kingdome, and healing sicknesses, and diseases*, there is the miracle, that seeing it would be a wondrous thing that the Lord should match with dust and ashes, that hee should bestow himselfe thus freely on us, saith the Lord, if you will not beleieve me for the words sake, yet for the miracles sake, you see what I doe, I that preach this.

But you will say, these miracles were wrought long agoe, if they were done now, it were another thing.

Beloved,

Beloved, it is all one, for know, that this word and miracle went then together, the word is as ancient as the miracle, therefore you must make the same use of them now, as you would have done then; indeed if the word were now delivered and the miracle wrought long agoe, it were another case, but when hee that said the word, at the same time confirmed it with these miracles, this may worke beleefe.

You will say, this miracle confirms it in generall, if the Lord should speake personally to me, & say, I will be thy *Husband*, this were to purpose.

Beloved consider, it is all one, because you have this generall, he bids *the Gospell be preached to every Creature*, therefore thou art sure thou art in that number: consider that the word of promise also, which word you all know, that *Whosoever beleeveth shall be saved*, that is, whosoever will take his pardon shall be saved, and nothing keepes men from salvation, but the refusing it; therefore say not, he that commits such and such sinnes, shall be damned, but hee that takes not the pardon shall be damned: Beloved, this is a matter of great consolation, this is that that is our Freehold, we have a sure word, and this is the Gospell that we have to preach, that whatsoever the rebels be, and whatsoever the sinnes are, yet they may come in, and be received.

I, but my sinnes are great, as red as skarlet?

What if they be? they shall be as snow.

But I have often committed them.

What if thou have? he that said to thee, thou shalt

Object.

Answ.

202262

shalt forgive thy brother to seaventy times seaven times, sure hee is able to forgive to seaventy thousand times seaven times.

Object.

Answe.

But my finnes are exceeding great as the mighty mountaines. They shall be drowned in the bottome of the sea, that is as able to drowne mountaines, as the least hill.

Oh! but they are exceeding many; I am guilty of all variety of finnes, there is scarce any grosse sinne, but I have committed it.

There is as great variety and multitudes of mercy, to cover and swallow them.

You will say, this is possible if my heart were soft, able to repent; but I have a hard obdurate heart.

If thy heart be hard, he can take away that stony heart, and give thee a fleshy heart; this hee hath promised: Why now what hast thou to doe? even to lay fast hold on this word, as they did on the hornes of the Altar, and even goe and say to the Lord, Lord, I will hold me here. Lord, it is thy word, thou canst not deny it, Lord, if thou wilt kill me, here I will dye, I will not let my hold goe: I say, if thou doe but take hold of this word, *That He justifieth the ungodly, and whosoever will beleewe shall be saved*; if thou take this hold, I assure thee, my life for thine, it is impossible, but the Lord should in the end give thee this answer, *Be of good comfort, thy faith hath saved thee*. I deny not, but that the Lord may hold off for a while, for a time he may keepe off and give thee hard words, and say as hee did to the woman of Canaan,

Canaan, that hee is not sent to such a dog as thou art; but if thou persist as she did, and keepe close to this word of promise, then after thou shalt receive the same answer that shee did, *thy faith hath saved thee, be of good comfort.*

But you will say, if it be thus, this seemeth to be a very easie thing. Is there no more to doe?

I answer, yes: and thou must marke diligently, that thou runne not away with a false conceit now.

First, thou must take out this pardon. You know a pardon in Law though the Prince give it, if it be not taken and sued out, it will do a man no good.

Againe, this pardon hath certaine conditions, thou must remember the conditions; if thou wilt have the pardon, thou must observe the covenants and conditions.

Lastly, know that this pardon may be for a certaine time, after which the pardon may be out of date.

For the first of these, you will say, what is it to take out the pardon?

Beloved, it is this, when a man hath seene his sinnes and knowes his need, and his rebellions (for that is first required) as you know whosoever pleads a pardon, must know himselfe guilty, and then seeketh a pardon, prayeth earnestly day and night & giveth not over, beseecheth the Lord to forgive his sinnes, and also if he stay long (as some times he doth, as we see in that Parable of the man that was in bed with his children, and loath

loath to rise) yet thou must continue knocking, and not give over till he give thee.

What is it, he will give me (you will say ?)

That is, till he give thee a secret assurance, till he send his Spirit from heaven, to say to thy soule in thee, *I am thy salvation*, till hee give thee some secret comfort, when thou hast that once, then thou hast taken out thy pardon. But till there be some calming of thy conscience, some secret answer of the Spirit, though there be a pardon contained in the word, thou hast not taken it out; for thou takest it not out till the Lord gives it out: and when thou once gerrest this secret hint, thou hast thy pardon sued out. Now let Satan and thine enemies come, thou maist be bold to plead thou hast thy pardon, and it shall never be taken from thee; that is the first thing, *To take out thy pardon.*

The second is, there is a condition required after taking it: there is this condition in it, you must be no longer rebels, you must come in, and be subjects, and serve and obey your King. I say, you must remember this, therefore thou must goe to the Lord, and say, I know well there is such a condition in the pardon, I am content to enter into covenant with thee; so that that which is past may be cleared, I resolve for the time to come to serve thee, and feare thee and obey thee; I say, if thou canst bring thy heart to this purpose and resolution, thou hast kept the condition.

Quest.

But you will say, how shall wee doe to keepe it?

it ? it is one thing to purpose , but to keepe it is hard.

I will be bold to say , take no care for that , if thy purpose be sincere ; I say this to any , let his purpose be sincere , and his resolution without deceit and pretences to serve the Lord , to cleave to him as a husband ; then I say , the Lord hath undertaken to give thee a new heart still , and hee will enable thee to keepe it : bring thou a wel-bottomed new resolution , so as to say , I will give up my selfe in obedience ; and the Lord hath promised , it is one part of the Covenant , wherein hee hath promised not onely to forgive , but in *Ezech. 36*. He will give a new heart and a new spirit : be thou but willing to take him , and thou shalt be able to doe that which thou hast undertaken.

Ansiv.

Well , the last thing is the time of the pardon , there may be a time when the pardon is out of date.

You will say , what is that time ?

Quest.

Know that there is a double time , one is the time that is revealed to us , that are the Ministers of the Gospell , that is the time of this life , for we can say nothing else to any man but this , *At what time soever , while thou livest , thou repentest , thou shalt be saved.*

Ansiv.

But then you must know , there is another time besides this , a time that is not revealed to us , but knowne onely to the Lord himselfe , which may be thy time , and is that distance of time which is betweene the first and the last offer.

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202262

It is indeed the very offer it selfe, the very opportunity that God gives to thee, the very time of the tender of Christ, to thy soule. Now this is onely knowne of the Lord himselfe, what that distance of time is between the first offer and the last that ever he will make to thee, and after this time this pardon is out of date to thee, though not to another, it is too late for thee to come in.]

Quest.

You will say, what ground is there for this, that there is such another time, that is onely knowne to the Lord?

Answ.

My beloved, it is a point worth the considering, therefore you shall see a ground for it, 2 Cor. 6. 2. when the Apostle had exhorted them there, *not to take the Grace of God in vaine*, saith he, *this is the accepted time, this is the day of salvation*, implying, that all time is not the accepted time, for then there needed no distinction; but when he saith, *this is the accepted time*, there is a secret intimation, that when salvation is offering for ought thou knowest this is so, the accepted time, as that when that is past, there is no more opportunity. So in *Hebr. 3. when it is called to day*, that is, when the offer is making, that is the time.

Now to give you some instances of this, as well as we give you grounds from the word, in *Gen. 4.* God saith to Cain, *If thou doe well, shalt thou not be accepted?* but now after that time Cain was accursed and a brand set on him, the Lord gives him over, hee was excluded from the presence of the Lord for ever; there was a secret time

time after which the Lord made the offer no more. That was the case of *Saul*; there was a time, I say, Gods time with *Saul*, was the time betweene his first offer, and the last, when he bid *Samuel* pray no more for him, and he told *Samuel* resolutely and peremptorily, I have rejected him, and now there was no more hope. And this was the case of the Jewes, when he bade *Jeremiah* not to pray for them, saith he, I have resolved to destroy them, the time now is past. And this was the case of Jerusalem, *If thou hadst knowne the things, the things that belong to thy peace*, in that thy day! if you aske what that day was? I say you shall find the very period of it, *Acts 13. 40.* you shall see there, when the offer was made fully (that was the Lords great mercy to them, he doth not give over a man, till he have made the offer clearly and fully) in *V. 46.* *It was necessary we should speake the word first to you; but since you put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of eternall life, wee turne to the Gentiles*; you may see their refusing before. The Jewes they were full of envy, and spake against the things that He spake; after this time, the Lord made no more offer: this I say, was their case, and it is resembled in the Parable of them that were invited to the marriage, after they were invited and refused; the inviters were sent forth no more unto them. It was the case of *Capernaum*, and those Citties to whom the seventy were sent; if they would not receive them, they were to *shake the dust off their feete against them.*

Beloved, I beseech you consider this, for it

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202262

is a matter of very much moment to thinke with your selves, what know I whether this be the very time when the Lord makes the last offer, and that how ever, it will not last ever. So you see *S. Paul* to the *Hebr.* ends Chap. 3. when hee had said, there is a certaine day, he brings his prooffe, faith hee, did not the Lord doe so with your fathers in the Wildernesse? Now you shall see with those in the Wildernesse, the Lord tooke renne refusals at their hands, *These tenne times you have rebelled against me*, and then he would endure no longer. So the Lord deales at other times: it may be hee will take but five refusals at another, it may be twenty at another, it may be but one or two, at a third mans hand. I say, you must be exceeding carefull and wary, for the end of this Doctrin is to teach you to take heed of refusing Christ Jesus, of letting the opportunity slip, take heed of refusing the time of the offer of Christ, the accepted time, when the Lord offers Christ in the word, and by his Spirit accompanying it, it is dangerous to refuse. To conclude this point, consider, when the Lord himselve shall be a suitor; beloved, wee should be suitors to him, but hee is pleased to be a suitor to us. And consider, that whereas other women use to bring portions to their husbands, hee is pleased to buy us, and to give us portions, and can you find in your heart to refuse?

Obiect.

You will say; if I were sure the Lord would take me.

Beloved, you shall see how farre hee goes, that

that wee may put you out of all doubt.

First, he hath made a very cleare declaration of his good will: he saith, *Whosoever will come, shall be saved*, he shall be taken in, whosoever will come. This is not all, but he goes further then that, he hath not onely set up such a *Quicumque vult*, but he sends home to us, hee calls and invite us, *goe, call and invite them to the marriage*. This is not all, but he goes yet further, he beseecheth us, hee becomes a downeright suitor, 2 Cor. 5. *Wee are Ambassadors in Christs stead, to beseech you to be reconciled*. Nay beloved, more then this, hee is not a cold, but an importunate earnest suitor. *Goe, compell them to come in*, saith he, that is, with the strongest arguments you can use: he doth not rest here, here is as much as hee can doe by faire meanes. But then he tryes the other, to see what he can doe by foule meanes, then he layes a command upon men, 1 Iohn 1. 3. *This is the Commandement, that we beleve in his Sonne*: hee commands all men living to come in, and take Christ, and receive the pardon. And it is not a bare command, but hee adds a threatning; If they will not take him, they shall be damned: which is the greatest threatning that can be. Consider, wilt thou refuse now? I will say but this in a word, if thou wilt for all this, it shall be the greatest matter against thee at the day of Judgment: take all sinnes, the grossest Idolatry, and adultery, and whatsoever else: they shall not be so much laid to thy charge when thou comest to lye on thy death-bed as this; that Christ was preached, that

20226

there was so many offers made , and yet thou wouldest none of him. Therefore consider this, and say not now , alas, such conditions are required on my part, as I cannot performe them ; for beloved , there is nothing required on thy part but sincerity. Indeed that is required : thou must not thinke when thou art matched to thy husband , to live as if thou wert a maid still ; thou must not thinke to match with thy husband, and to live as thou list, thou must not thinke to sweare still , and follow the lust of uncleanness, still, and to follow thy drunkenesse and good fellowship still, thou must not thinke to match with the Lord Jesus, and breake the Sabbath and neglect holy duties, and violate thy conscience, thou must know , that all thy old cloathing , as I said before, must be put off, and not onely so , but thy nailes must be pared, that is, those thoughts that thou reckonest lesser sinnes, vaine thoughts, idle thoughts , negligent performance of holy duties, or whatsoever is of that nature, these nailes must be pared, there must be a sincere heart , to resolve to doe all this. But so much for those second sort of men, that will not beleieve there is such a pardon, but yet cannot thinke the Lord Jesus is willing to match with them, and to passe by the great sinnes that they have committed.

But now for the third sort , which is indeed of the greatest company of men ; for wee finde not so many men doubt , whether they shall be forgiven or no, but though they know there is a pardon,

pardon, and that the Lord will match with them, yet they are willing to live as they did, they are not willing to come under his subjection to live by his Lawes. Now besides consider, what is the cause of this, what keeps men off from this.

First, you shall find one great generall cause is *Inconsideration*: this is the fault of young men, that have a thousand vanities in their heads, and never think of matching with Christ, and of their spirituall estate: And not of them onely, but of others too, who as they are held off by pleasures, so others by businesse, as appears in those invited to the marriage: one went about his merchandize, another to his oxen, and never considered, they never tooke to heart this their inviting to the marriage: consider that in *Deut 32. 27.* When *Moses* had made an exhortation, that they should not receive the strange Gods of the people, but come into covenant and bee married to him (for that is the scope of the Chapter) threatning with all, that when they should provoke him to jealousy, he would provoke them; saith hee, *oh that you werewise to consider your latter end*, as if he should say; this is the cause that you come not in, and keepe not close to the Lord, *oh that you were wise to consider*; for it is a mans wisdom to consider this, for a wise man stands as one upon the top of an high hill or a rocke, and so he lookes round about him, and sees all events before they come, whereas a foole is taken unawares by death, hee is arrested, and judgement comes upon him on the suddaine

as a snare : therefore I say , thou must consider. And yet this is the usual case of men, they go on in a secure sleepe in sinning whilst death and iudgement breaks in upon them, which by consideration might be prevented. Therefore if you aske me what you must consider, I say consider if this bee not thy case, as it is of many men, many owe more than they are worth, more than they know how to pay : now if they would but consider their case, and but cast up their accounts, it may be they might seeke out for a match to discharge all, but they neglect it, and are secure, & an arrest coms on them, and they are cast into prison, and now it is too late. Therefore I say to every man of you, consider thy debts, thy sinnes, yea, consider those sinnes thou thinkest are past so many yeeres since, that lay still, and thou hearest no more of them. I say consider them, and bring them to mind, and consider what a sleeping sinne is : You may see it in the case of *Ioab*, when hee had committed those foule murthers of *Abner* and *Amasa*, the Lord let it sleepe for a time, and *Ioab* was secure ; but you see in due season, he having not sued out his pardon, the arrest came upon him, and *Salomon* slew him, and such was the case of the sin of *Shimei* that he committed against *David*, it lay a sleepe for a time. Such was the case of *Iosephs* brethren, in that they did against *Ioseph*, many yeeres together it lay quiet, when it awakened, they saw what it was with anguish. Therefore consider what a sleeping sinne is, the forgetfulnesse of which maketh men secure. Men commit sins, and they are in health, and

and forget them, and so not considering their debts, they regard not this match and goe not about it.

There is another part of security, wherewith men are involved, and that is, they thinke they have matched already with *Iesus Christ*, they thinke they are in an estate good enough, and to come now to make a change of it, they thinke strict precisenesse and more then needs.

And this one thing keeps many thousands off from matching, that they thinke their debts are paid, that they are in good estate, and they thinke that they are under covert. But to answer it in a word, I wish thee to consider those plaine places of Scripture, *Gal. 5. 24. whosoever is in Christ, hath crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*, and that in *2 Cor. 5. 17. whosoever is in Christ is a new creature, old things are passed away, all things are become new*. And that *Iam. 2. 10. If a man faile but in one point, (willingly and constantly) hee is guilty of the breach of the whole Law*. in *Ezech. 18. 10, &c.* The new translation doth not so well expresse it as the old; *If hee beget a Sonne, if he doe any of these things, though not all, if hee beget a Sonne that is a thiefe, or a shedder of bloud, if hee doe one of these things, if not all, but either hee eate upon the mountaines, or have defiled his neighbours wife, or have oppressed the poore, &c. if he have done but one of these, hee shall dye the death, his bloud shall be upon his head*. Not to name more; I say, out of this I gather, that he that allowes himselfe in the least sin, he that respects not all the Commandements, and

the least small particle in them, that man is not yet matched with the Lord Jesus. And therefore doe not deceive your selves with vaine words, to thinke that these excluding signes and markes, and rules that wee give, are inventions of our owne, that they are too strict beyond our Commission. Beloved, this plaine word by which you shall be judged at the last day, makes it plaine to you, that except there be such a generall reformation, except you be new in all points, except all your lusts be crucified, except you respect all the Commandements, and every particle thereof, unlesse that there be a generall sincerity, certainly you are excluded. Therefore I say, take all these together, that though thou be quiet for awhile, and free from the arrest, that yet thou art not out of danger, thy sinne is but laid asleepe, &c. I say, if a man doe but seriously consider with himselfe, if hee sit downe, but one halfe houre, and consider what the shortnesse of his life is, what his danger is, and thinke there is another place that he must live in, for eternity, and then consider this, I may be surprized on the suddaine, as the foolish Virgins; the Bridegroom came when they did not looke for him; and if he doe, what is thy case? know this, that it is too late to be matched at that time; as when the destroying Angell came, it was too late to sprinkle the doore postes with the bloud of the Lambe; but the time of it, is the time of the Passe-over; he will come at midnight, when thou lookest not for him; and if it were to be done at
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that instant, no man should be damned; know this, that it must be done before; therefore consider seriously, and lose not your soules by inconsideration. But to proceed a little further to another impediment: for when a man hath considered the match, hee begins to make *objections* against it, as,

First, he lookes upon his husband, and he sees he must live in a poore and meane condition, hee must take up his Crosse and be despised, and contemned, and trampled upon, and when hee begins to thinke of this, hee is unwilling to match: for saith he, I am not willing to live after this fashion.

Obi. 1.

To this I may answer in a word; for the Lord himselfe gives a very direct and quicke answer to this; saith he, I will deceive none of you, I will deale plainely with you, if you match with me, I say, your condition will be very base, and mean, and *Blessed is hee that is not offended with that meane condition.* I confesse, if you match with me, you must take up your crosse, you must be persecuted and despised, and hated of all men; therefore saith he, choose you, I leave it to you to make your owne choice; if you will not match, you may choose. But sayes hee, hee that is not willing to lose his life, and part with father and mother, and let lands, and credit, and liberty, and all goe, he is not worthy of me. Wherein he implies, that the Lord is worthy to be matched with, notwithstanding all this base condition, and that thou art unworthy of him, that stickest at it. And if thou
didst

Ans.

didst know who he was, thou wouldest notwithstanding match with him to choose. If the Bridegroom, the Lord *Iesus*, should come in glory with his Bridegroomes apparell, if hee should come decked with ornaments, with thousands of his Angels about him, every man would be willing to match with him; but here is the tryall what thou wilt doe at this time, it appeares not yet what he is, and what he will doe, while he is now covered with a base out-side, now he is hid. But yet he deales plainely you see with us. I remember a Story of *Crates*, the Philosopher, when a virgin desired to match with him, he takes this course, he goes to her, and tells her, and shewes her his crooke-back, his staffe, and his satchell, and saith this to her, this is thy husband and thy portion, wilt thou be content to take such a one as I? she persisted: but when shee had him, shee knew shee had another manner of husband then she looked for. I use it but for a resemblance; for after this manner doth the Lord *Iesus* deale with us. You must suffer the crosse, and goe out of the Camp; this is your husband, this is your portion, the crosse is your joynture. Now thou maist choose, if thou wilt match with him, so it is. I say now to every man that is willing, that persists for all this; thou shalt have the King of heaven for thy husband, thou matchest with such a one, as shall make thee happy for ever, this is thy happinesse, thou shalt have thy worst first, the best is reserved for afterward: with the world it is quite otherwise; there you have the best first, and

and the worst followes after : Therefore here is the tryal; all the matter is to love Christ, in a base and meane estate, and I say this to thee, thou shalt have the same answer from Christ one day, that if thou be not content to match with him, in a meane condition, if thou wilt not take him for worse, thou shalt never have him for better; if thou wilt not have him in a low condition, thou shalt not have him in a glorious. *Rom. 8. 17.* hee saith, *those that suffer with him, shall also be glorified with him*: and so on the contrary, hee that doth not suffer with him, that is, hee that is not content to take him with sufferings and with the Crosse, he shall never raigne, and be glorified in heaven with him.

But yet men will still say, are not these hard conditions that goes with this match? if otherwise, I should much desire it. And every man is content to have the kernell, but hee would not trouble his teeth with the hardnesse of the shell.

Object.

And indeed, there are in appearance hard conditions. For he must be taken for a Lord, and a husband; and for this cause many will not take him, this keepes many off.

And who would not be religious, if he thought it an easie thing to be religious? Men thinke they shall be tyed and straight-laced, and never be able to endure the yoake.

But yet I say to every man that thinkes so, hee shall not finde it so: these conditions that thou thinkest so hard are easie.

First.

First, the Lord hath said in plaine tearmes; if thou wilt beleeve his word, that *his yoke is easie, and his burthen light*: I will make it plaine to thee, thou shalt not deny it. There are but two things that make the burthen of Christ, that is his Law, to be hard, and that is either

The contrariety, or,
The disproportion.

For, there is nothing makes a thing hard, but one of these two.

One is the contrariety betweene our wills; the reluctancy betweene our wills and Gods. Christ will have one thing, and wee another: hence comes the difficulty. If our wills were the same, then there were no difficulty, then a man lives as he would, as he list. But beloved, if thou match with him, he will give thee another will; he will take away that reluctancy and renitancy, he will take away thy old nature, thou shalt have a new nature, and a new will, and so then they are easie.

The other is from disproportion: if a man have a great burthen and a little strength, the burthen proves heavy, why? not because the burthen is in it selfe heavy, but because there is but little strength. Now know, that Christ is such a husband, as that what hee gives in charge, hee will give strength to doe it; this I touched the last time, in comparing the two husbands, *Rom. 7.* see there our first husband the Law, to which every man is marryed, till hee be matched to Christ; that is a hard yoke, he commands much
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and gives no strength to performe it, it commands all things exactly. But the other husband requires but Evangelicall obedience, hee commands, but that that is possible, and gives strength to doe it. When againe thou servest him in newnesse of spirit; hee will raise up thy strength, and make a fitnesse, and suteablenesse, and proportion betweene thy strength and it; therefore thou shalt find no such difficulty in the thing, if thou resolve on the match once, so as thou shouldest never feare the hardnesse of the burthen, that thou shouldest not bee able to obey thy husband.

In setting out the other impediments that keepe men off from being willing to match with Christ, wee will keepe still the same order, and to the similitude here as wee have done hitherto.

The next impediment is, that we shall not have any great dowry for the present; there is much promised, but we shall enjoy but little of it yet; though we shall have much hereafter, yet we have it not now; this is a great impediment, and keeps off many men. It is the case of many; they think with themselves, if I match now with Christ, I have much promised, that I shall have heaven; and many things to come hereafter; but for the present, I must forsake my pleasure, my profit, my delights. Now answer this, and all is done. But beloved, it must be Christ himselfe, that must answer it: though wee be the instruments, and the meanes, yet except he speake with us, it will

will doe no good; the Lord himselfe must be his owne spokelman; yet I answer, it is true indeed, the great dowry is to come, ye must wait for it; this time is a time of serving, as *Jacob*, hee served foureteeneyears for *Rachel* before he had her, and because he loved her, he thought the time short, he was willing to serve so long. Now if thou love Christ, if thou prize him above all; then thou wilt be willing to stay for him; and those that will not stay, it is a signe they doe not love Christ, and therefore thou art not worthy of him. You must know, that Christ makes us thus to stay a time, to know and trye his Spouse before he match with her, (indeed the match is now, but I speake of that glorious match with the Lambe at his second comming, when wee shall receive the full dowry) which the Apostle speaks of, *1. 1am. 12. verse, Blessed is hee that endureth temptation; for when hee is tryed, hee shall receive a Crowne of life, which he hath promised to those that love him, and waite for his appearing.* Beloved, ye must be content to beleve for a time, enjoying is not yet come. Christ will trye our patience, our faith, he will trye whether his Spouse will take his word or no, whether shee will rest upon him, whether shee will beleve him: this is that I say, that holds off many men, because they shall have nothing here. But therein they doe not looke upon the whole life of man, wee looke but upon part, wee onely care to provide for a short time here, and not for the whole life of man, which is eternall: and this is that which makes us to erre;

as the cause of all error in all the actions of men, is because they looke upon some part of a businesse, and not upon all. When a man lookes upon some part of a case, and not upon every part, this makes them judge amisse: So in this spirituall case we erre, because we doe not looke upon the whole life of man, to provide for our good hereafter, as well as the present. The reason is, because as the Apostle sayes 2 *Pet.* 1. and 9. ver. *We are purblind, and cannot see a farre off.* Indeed this is the case of all that match with Christ, they have the worst for the present, the best is reserved. Indeed worldlings they have the best for the present, and the worst is reserved. Consider of it which is best, an heire that is in his minority is content to serve and doe as a servant doth, because he knowes notwithstanding there is a difference betweene him and a servant, he shall, he knowes, when he comes to age, enjoy his lands, and therefore he is contented, though as yet he is used as a servant. Indeed if he knew he should not live to enjoy his lands; but dye before he come to age, then it were somewhat, if he were discontented to live so: but we shall be sure to live unto them, we shall enjoy them; as in that 2 Epistle to the *Corinth.* 4. 17. 18. *For the momentany lightnesse of our tribulation prepareth for us an eternall weight of Glorie: while we looke not upon things that are seene, but upon things that are not seene; for the things that are seene are temporall, but the things that are not seene are eternall.* The time that we are to be here is short, if we consider it with eternity; and beloved, if we
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did but seriously thinke of the time we are to be here, and eternity hereafter, wee should not so much sticke upon these earthly things as wee doe.

But to come neerer, and answer it to purpose; if thou accept of this match, thou shalt have more, even for the present, then the full vintage of the men of this world, as in that 10. Chapter of Marke, 29. 30. *There is no man that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, for my sake and the Gospels, but hee shall receive now in this time an hundred fold; houses, brethren, sisters, fathers, mothers, and children and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come life everlasting: even with persecutions a man shall receive an hundred fold.* If you aske how can that be, that a man with persecution shall receive an hundred-fold in this life? for Answer, we must compare this place with the 2 Cor. 6. 10. *As sorrowfull, yet alway rejoycing; as poore, and yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things:* though they have a sorrowfull time outwardly, yet they have abundance of inward joy, which they have in the grace and favour of God. This is your usuall Proverb, *Hee is rich whom God loves.* Though a man lose credit with the world, and praise with men, and estimation, which keepes many men off; yet thou shalt have joy in God, peace of conscience, which is a hundred times better. But you will say, what if they be put into prison? shall they then have an hundred-fold in this life? yes, for their imprisonment.

prisonment is better then worldly mens liberty. It is said, that when *Ioseph* was put into prison, that the Lord went in with him, and was with him, and therefore it was no prison: for what is it that makes it a prison? The Lords abtence, a man hath more joy in a prison wherein God is, then in a Palace without God; as you may see in *Saul*; when the Lord was departed from him, his Palace was but a prison to him. Brethren, if you beleeve this, that you shall have more for the present, if ye will accept of this match, you will not any longer stand out. But if you will not beleeve, for all that I have said, we have no more to say to you in brieft, but this: thou shalt have thy portion in this life, as the Prodigall sonne, hee would have his portion presently: well, if you will have your portion, ye shall have it, as in that 17. Psal. 14. *The men of this world, who have their portions in this life.* You shall have your portions in this life, thou shalt have thy belly filled with treasures: but remember that terrible sentence, *Thou hast thy reward.* Therefore it is no marvell, that worldlings live so contentedly, with so much outward ease; it is no marvell I say, for their father hath given them their portion.

Another impediment is; when parents have provided a fit match for their children, and come and propound it to their children; then they are promised to another, their hearts are set upon others: and this is a great impediment in this, and it is common. Now the Lord comes to propound this match to thee; but thou canst not forsake

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those things that thy affections are set upon, thou hast made another choise, thy heart is set upon these outward things, thou hast promised thy love and delight to them, and thou must now refuse the suite of the Kings Sonne. This one day will lye heavy upon thy conscience, when as this Christ that thou hast now rejected, shall come to Judgement, and shall sit upon his glorious Throne, and shall pronounce that heavy sentence, *Depart from me ye cursed*; and then thy conscience shall tell thee, oh hee was once a suitor to me, but I had made another choice, a worse choice; which then thou findest, though it seemed pleasant for the time, yet indeed his service would have beene more pleasant and profitable; for hee would have thee live but according to the rule, in temperance, sobriety, in diligence, in thy calling, and such like, which would have kept thy body in health, and preserved thy estate; and now thou hast wasted thy body in fornication, and uncleanness, and hast wasted thy goods in drunkenness and good-fellowshippe, and all riotous living: and so if we should stand to compare every particular service of each husband, wee should finde that our obedience to our right husband, is more pleasant then that wee have now chosen; nay wee should finde that the worst actions that Christ commands, are farre more pleasant then the best of the other; as take sorrow for sinne, that wee count the worst and the hardest duty, yet even in that there goes along with it a secret sweetnesse, and

and comfort; those that have any experience in it, know it to be true: but when as thou yeeldest obedience to thy other husband, even in the midst of thy carnall delights, thy heart is sad, there is a kinde of perplexity goes along with it: this wee shall finde in all the actions we doe to this wrong husband, a secret griping and sting- ing of conscience; and besides this, wee shall at length be paid with death.

But in our obedience to our right husband, more-over and above our comfort in his service, he will give us wages and rewards, eternall life, and all the comforts appertaining thereunto. But in brieft, if you will not yeeld, if you will not be ruled, God will doe with you as parents doe with rebellious children, if they are stub- borne, and match against their will; when as neither promises nor perswasions will doe any good, what will they doe? Why, they will disin- herit them. So if ye will be stubborne, and nei- ther perswasions nor promises will doe no good with you, but notwithstanding all this, you will not remove your affections from off your choice; your Father shall disinherit you, you shall lose your Kingdome, you shall be damned; if you will not cut off your right hands, and cut out your right eyes that offend you, yee shall keepe them, but ye shall goe to hell with them. If you will not beleewe us, wee have no more to say to you, ye shall lose your birth-right.

Another impediment if so be we find we stand in need of an husband to pay our debts, yet we are not

disposed to marry yet. But know, if thou wilt not take the time before the time be past, thou shalt sit long enough without suitors. Christ he is a suitor by his Spirit; and wee are his friends to perswade you to match with him. Now consider how that Hee onely must perswade: wee may perswade long enough; if no other doe perswade you, you will never be wonne: but there is another, the Lord himselfe, he is his owne spokesman, and must be, or else you will never be won. And therefore, take heed of deferring when thou findest the holy Ghost a suitor to thee, and that Christ speakes to thy heart, take heed of refusing: *his Spirit shall not alwayes strive with man*: if he knocke but once, open to him, perhaps hee will knocke no more. Take heed of delayes and puttings off, bidding Christ come another time; for we commonly say, delayes are dangerous. If thou dost, thou maist lose thy suitor, and Christ may let thee sit all thy life time, and never be a suitor to thee againe. There is indeed a time, when all would match with Christ in their extremity at their deaths, as the foolish Virgins, they came when it proves too late, the doores were shut. When the arrest comes upon us, then wee would match with Christ, but then it is too late, then Christ will not match with thee; then wee may fly to *the hornes of the Altar*, as *Ioab* did, but then Christ will say, as *Solomon* did of *Ioab*, *Goe fall upon him, and kill him*, even there. There is a refuge in the City, but thou must be a Cittizen there, before the avenger of bloud comes. Then

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is not a time to marry with Christ, then is a time to call to mountaines to fall upon you and cover you, and furthermore whereas thou sayest, thou wilt hereafter match with Christ, but not yet, what knowest thou but that thy soule may presently be taken from thee? and therefore you see what a deale of folly men shew in their puttings off.

Another impediment is, when the parties are brought together, to see one another; many times they doe not like one another: and this is a common case: and so it is in this spirituall match; when men come to looke upon the Lord, they doe not like the Lord: well, if this be thy case, if it be thus with thee, the Lord will not be so much as a suitor to thee, hee counts thee an enemy. There is an antipathy betweene the Lord and many, there is an enmity; but you must know, in this there is a two-fold enmity; one out of ignorance, as *Paul*, sayes he, *I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, but now I am received to mercy, because I did it ignorantly through unbeleefe.* If hee had knowne the Lord, hee would not have persecuted him. But secondly, there is also a wilfull enmity against the Lord: they know the Lord, and yet they doe not like him. But these men will deny this, and say, this is not the cause they come not in, whatsoever is the cause. Well, doe not deceive thy selfe; if thou love the Lord, thou wilt love his Image, thou wilt love his children which are his Image. If thou hatest those that beare his Image, thou hatest the Lord himselfe.

And therefore doe not deceive thy selfe: if thou bearest a secret hatred and dislike of that strictnesse and holinesse, that is in the Saints, if thou hast an inward grudge to that which is Gods Image, thou hatest God himselfe.

But perhaps thou wilt say, I hate him because he is an hypocrite; if hee were the child of God I would love him, but I hate his hypocrisie.

But take heed, that when thou striketh an hypocrite, a Saint lyes not a bleeding; so also when a man lyeth under a sharp and powerfull Ministry, and thou bearest hatred and dislike of it, thou hatest the Lord himselfe whose ordinance it is. This was the case of the Jewes, when the Apostles had shewed them the Lord Jesus, and they saw all was rejected, what followed? we have no more to say to you, Christ would no longer be a suitor to them. Seing ye reject us, and will not receive this word of salvation, loe now we turne to the Gentiles, and those that will receive us. And therefore brethren, take heed of disliking the Lord, when hee comes a suitor to thee, doe not lay false aspersions upon him, and his wayes, and children, doe not beleeve false aspersions laid upon him by others; as those that were sent to spy Canaan, they brought up evill reports of that Land; what followed? not onely they were excluded out of the Land, but also all those that beleeved them.

Now thus we have shewed you the match, and given you some tryals to know, whether you are matched with Christ or no, as also what may stirre

stirre you up to accept this match, if yee finde upon examination, that ye are not matched with him, also the impediments that keepe men off from the match: that if any of them be your case, ye may remove it. But brethren, all this can doe nothing to procure this match; this will not worke upon you, except the Lord be his owne spokes-man to winne your loue, hee it is that must winne you. Men are like dead men when wee speake to them; but if Christ speake not by his Spirit, they are dead still; it is hee that must shew you your debt and your danger, and the beauty and excellency of your husband, and must remove the impediments.

And seeing that now you are to receive Christ offered in the Sacrament, this point may be a great helpe to strengthen your faith. When a man promises to match with one, this helps well foreward to the match: but when the man is in the Church, and offers himselfe to match with thee, then wee cannot chuse but beleewe it: *Hee that eateth and drinketh this unworthily, he is guilty of the body and bloud of the Lord:* therefore doe not take it hand over head, but examine whether thou standest in need of Christ, canst thou set a price upon him, as the chiefeest thing thou wantest? The great match is made in Baptisme: this is but the renewing of the Nuptials and new Aêtes of taking and receiving Christ. Consider then, if thou have matcht with Christ before, else if thou camest hither, this is a great provocation to the Lord: for that

202262

which is required of thee now is, that thou take Christ with more willingnesse, still that thou come with more desires and longing after the Lord Jesus, or else thou dost receive unworthily. Consider every time thou comest, of what need thou standest in of Christ, and in this thing thou must take some paines with thy heart, every time thou comest, to see more need thou standest in of Christ, and also examine strictly what thou hast done amisse, and worke thy heart to unfained sorrow, and make up all breaches before thou comest, as thou dost with men, which is a very commendable thing, and if thou have any request to put up to him, this is a speciall day of hearing. Whatsoever jewell thou wouldst have to beautifie thy selfe, that is, whatsoever graces thou wantest to beautifie thy soule, what change of rayment thou wouldst weare to adorne thy conversation, what temptation hath long haunted thee, thou canst not be rid of, aske of thy husband now upon this day; this is the marriage day; this is a faire opportunity to aske any thing of thy husband: aske thy husband now, he will not deny thee, nay, whatsoever thou wantest for this life, for thy body, aske it now, for all is thine; whatsoever thou desirest, any gift for soule or body, whatsoever it be that thou wouldest have him to take from thee, that hurts thee, or whatsoever thou wouldest have him give thee, to doe thee good, aske it: I dare be bold to say, hee will not deny thee; for if *Herod* because of his oath, would not deny the daughter

ter of *Herodias*, even to the halfe of the Kingdome, didst thou thinke that thy husband will deny thee any thing, that hath given himselfe to thee? hath he given thee the great? and dost thou thinke that he will deny thee the lesse, if it be good for thee? if hee doe deny thee, it is because it is not convenient; or else, thou dost not aske it in due time, or else he will give thee a better thing.

To

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THE
CHURCHES
CARRIAGE,
OR
DUTY.

DELIVERED IN SVNDRY
Sermons at *Lincolnes Inne*.

By the late learned and Reverend Divine,
JOHN PRESTON.

Doctor in Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinary to his
Majesty, Master of *Immanuel Colledge* in *Cambridge*,
and sometimes Preacher at *Lincolnes Inne*.

Published by { *Thomas Goodwin,* } B^{rs}. in Divinitie.
 { *Thomas Ball,* }

EPH. 5. 33.

Let the wife see that she reverence her husband.

2 COR. II. 2.

*For I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste
virgin to Christ.*

LONDON,

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202262



THE CHVRCHES CARRIAGE.

EPHES. 5. 22. 23. 24.

Wives, submit your selves unto your owne husbands, as unto the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church: and he is the Saviour of the body.

Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their owne husbands in every thing.

THE Scope of the Apostle is, to shew that wives ought to be subject to their husbands, which he inforceth upon them with this argument; for so is the Church to Christ. My scope is onely to speake of the latter: for whereas formerly I pressed men to receive *Iesus Christ*; Now because the chiefeest thing they sticke at is, being subject to him (which yet is a thing necessary if they receive him aright) for men

202262

men having lived all their lives at liberty, would doe still, although it be the condition of those that are married to Christ, to be subject to him, as it is of the woman to be to the man, as appears by that law first given. 3. *Gen. 16. Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and hee shall rule over thee*, that is, thy will shall be subject to his. Now this Text shews both, that the Church is subject to Christ, and the reasons why it should be so: There are three things in it.

1 That every man that takes Christ is subject to him: that is laid downe positively in the Text, the Church is subject to Christ.

2 That every man that takes him ought to be.

3 That it is best for them so to be, and to that end the Apostle gives two reasons, for hee is their head and Saviour.

I will bind up all into one point.

That every one that doth or will take Christ, he is and ought to be subject to him, and it is best for him so to be.

He that takes Christ, is subject to him; for so soone as there is an union made betweene the soule and Christ, so soone there is a power goes out from him, which bowes and fashions the heart, and makes it willing to keepe his Lawes, it causerh such a motion in the heart, as is in the members from the head: so soone as the will is willing to doe a thing, there is a readinesse also in the members, and the reason is, because there is the same spirit that is in the head transfused into

into the members, and so here the same spirit is communicated from Christ by vertue of this union to the members, and as soone as that union shall be perfect, and the Spirit shall dwell in all fulnes in us, then we shall have a full readinesse to obey him.

Now because it is but in part; therefore in regard of the degrees of it, there is much wanting in this readinesse to obedience, yet so, as there is in some measure some such inclination, though the members are weake and *paralyticall*, and contrary humours are in them, which much hinder their readinesse; yet so as there is an inclination in the mind, an intrinsecall aptnesse to be subject to Christ in all things.

That he that takes Christ ought to be subject. Now thou art matched with him, thou art engaged, thou hast covenanted with him, 1 Cor. 7.23. He is thy Lord, and hath bought thee, and thou hast sold thy selfe to him, yet hee hath bought thee of thy selfe, so as thou art not *tui juris*. It is an usuall thing for men to bethinke with themselves, how shall I bestow this day? and men forget that they are servants; for they are not to spend it in what is pleasant and profitable for themselves: for God hath bought them of themselves, and as a servant is to aske his master every morning what worke hee would have him to doe that day, so are ye; not a jot of strength is thine owne.

The last is, that it is best for men to be subject to him, and if men were perswaded that it were best

202262

best for them now at this time to be subject to him, they would come in: but it is one thing to thinke it generally best, and best for me at this time in my particular case. Now this is it, I will shew you and take the reasons in the Text.

1 Because he is a head, and that in foure respects.
In regard of Sovereignty.

In regard of preeminence and excellency.

Because hee gives life to the Church, as the head doth to the body.

Because hee is a guide to the Church, as the head is to the members.

1 Because hee is their Sovereigne Lord and Prince, for this subjection is in nature to be subject to him that is our Lord, and whom wee find set over us, and we thinke it no disparagement to be so. To subject our selves to an equall indeed, we may and doe thinke much at it: therefore now thinke, that he is a Prince, and thou art a base creature; and dost thou thinke much to be subject to him? all disobedience comes from this, that wee thinke our selves too good to obey him: as hee said, so men say secretly in their hearts, who is the Lord, that I should obey? and this they doe in every sinne.

And whereas it may be said, there are many great men set over men, which they will say, they see no great reason why they obey them; I am of more excellent parts then he: this may be objected against many Kings; and indeed, unlesse they do excell, obedience doth not come off willingly nor naturally.

Therefore

Therefore in the second place consider, he is a head for preeminence, 1 Col. 18. 19. *Hee is the head of the body; the Church, that in all things he might have the preeminence;* for it pleased the Father, that in him all fulnesse should dwell, that as in the head there are all the excellencies of the body in all fulnesse, the senses and the understanding, &c. so in him: now if a man had all excellencies in all fulnesse above all other men, all the world would obey that man. See it in beasts; an Eagle being the excellentest of fowles, nature hath made it the King of all: and were there such a man among men, there would be no resistance in nature to such an obedience to him. Now Christ is such an one, full of wisdom, full of love and meeknesse, &c. such an one as thy heart can wish.

In the third place, all this is for thy profit, if thou be obedient to him, for thou mightest say, why should I obey him? what is all this his excellency to me? when wee see the government wee live in, to be for our good, then we are willing to submit: if we had such a Governour as is mentioned in Judges, that would spend his fatnesse and his sweetnesse for us, him we would obey. Now *Iesus Christ* hath spent his fatnesse for your good, and all this fulnesse that is in him, is for the good of the body, Ephes. 1. last, speaking of Christ and the body, hee calls the body the fulnesse of him *who filleth all in all.*

The body is *the fulnesse of him*; for as the head makes not a compleate man without the body,

to nor Christ without his Church, and yet least this might be thought too much to be spoken of the body, that it should be the fulnesse of *Christ*, Therefore withall he shews that it is Christ which fills the Church, *it is the fulnesse of him who fills all in all*, emptying out his fulnesse into them, filling all with all the excellencies that are in himselfe. No excellency is in him, but hee stamps it upon the body; for he received it for their sakes. As the common Conduit receives not water from it self, but for others; so is he the common Conduit of Grace, a head which communicates the same life to his members he hath in himselfe, which was the third thing.

But ah! you will say I have no need of all this, nor of being subject to him; yes but thou hast, for thou canst not live without him: for as the Husband is said to be the guide of the Wife, hee is the guide of thy Youth, as the Scripture speaks; so is he to thee, and without him wee are in this world like men in the wide sea without a guide; if left alone, wee shall fall upon some rocks or sands, or other, and so perish: Hee is thy guide, and there is reason to be subject to a guide, A Folly to leave thy guide in a wood; and step out of the way from him. Nay he is a guide that *doth guide thy feet into the wayes of peace*; the wayes he wil lead thee in, lead into prosperity and peace.

The second reason in the text is, *He is the saviour of his Church*, he hath saved them already from the guilt and power of their sinnes, and hee is so continually, and thy safety consists in being obedient

dient to him: looke how many acts of disobedience, so many steps from under thy shelter into the storme, from out of the shade into the scorching Sun-shine. All the commandements wee have from him, are things, by which our lives are maintained: as fishes live in the water, so wee in the commandements, for they are our elements: so as withdrawing thy selfe from the commandements and going out of them tends to destruction; and it is as if a man should see a fish going out of the water: every such motion tends to death. If therefore a man would consider when he is about to commit a sin, that this act tends to death, and that to be subject to the commandement is my safety, hee would certainly keepe within compasse: if the commandements tended to destruction, we ought to doe them; for what are we but Gods vassals? he hath bought us. As they in the old law might doe what they would with their servants they had bought with their money, so might God, but when every commandement shall tend to thy good, so as thou canst not devise a better way for thy selfe than to obey them, wilt not thou much rather bee subject? 10 *Deut.* 13. In the former verses he had shewne that God had done great things for them, and therefore might doe as other masters, that command their servants that which is for their owne advantage, and not for their servants; and so God might do, and thou oughtest to be subject to him: but sayes hee in the thirteenth verse, what doth the Lord require of thee, but to keepe the commandements

of the Lord which he commands thee for thy good? Thou maist thinke that to sanctifie the sabboth is not for thy good, but now thou maist think happily by thy travell on that day, and plotting thy businesse to further thy wealth, or suppose that God bid thee be bold for him, and stand out for the profession of the truth, thou thinkest it may be thereby thou shalt lose much; and that by stepping out of his way, thou maist take in som convenience, or balke some crosse, which for doing his will would befall thee; but thou art deceived, thou shalt find that this shall bee for thy ruine, and though thou canst not see how this should be for thy good; yet shut thine eyes, beleeve it, for it will be so.

The use is, to exhort you to be willing to come to Christ: You see this great objection taken away, that men are loath to bee subject to him. I will further shew what it is to bee subject, and so addemotives.

1 If you would know what subjection is.

Subjection is, when an inferiour willingly submits to a superiour, there are two things in it.

1 It must be between an inferior and a superiour; for if a superiour doth it, it is not subjection, but yeelding; if an equall doth it, it is an agreement, compact, not a subjection.

It must be willingly, or else it is not said to bee subjection: to bee carryed captive is not to bee made subject; but when a man submits out of an inward inclination of his Will

Will, then it is said to bee obedience and subjection.

The second thing is, what wee must be subject to, and they are three things; First the counsell of Christ. Secondly, the Commandements of Christ. Thirdly, his providence, to be willing to be disposed of by him! And these three doe answer to al that is in a man; For 1. there is his mind or understanding; now to that answers counsell. Secondly, there is his will, to that answers commandement. Thirdly affections, they answer to his providence.

First wee must bee subject to the Counsell of Christ, that is, to thinke his wayes, and what hee commands, to be the wisest and the best way. And this is one thing a wife owes to her Husband, to be subject to his opinions: and *Paul*, when hee would expresse his obedience, sayes, *I consulted not with flesh and bloud*, that is, with my owne reason; but *I brought my mind into subjection to Christs mind*: I was willing to thinke his way the best, in 2 Cor 10. 5. This is called Subjection, namely, the bringing of every thought into subjection. The originall of disobedience is refractorinesse of thoughts, whereby a man thinkes his way better than Gods way, and therefore chuseth it, for every man doth what he thinkes best, and therefore in *Pro. 23. 4. Salomon* counselling men not to labour to be rich, because a man would say in his owne thoughts, why, it is good to be rich, therefore sayes he, *cease from thine owne wisdom*, that is, submit thy wisdom to Gods, hee knowes what

is better for thee : walk in thy calling without seeking inordinately to bee rich ; and if God cast riches upon thee, so it is. And so likewise a man that thinkes credit in regard of gifts, learning, parts, a goodly thing, cease from thine own wisdom, it being but as the Apostle saith *κενὴ δόξα* an empty thing, a thing blowne up by mens breaths : seeke not after it, follow his counsell. And thirdly so for pleasure, thou thinkest this or that thing to be most pleasant, cease from thy own wisdom, abstaine from it, and thou shalt have it some other way.

The second thing are his commands : if thou seeest he hath commanded a thing, which thou seeest no reason for, nay thou seeest no reason against it, yet doe not question it. The will of man is still objecting. See this now in *Adam* and *Saul*. In the commandement given to *Adam*, there is nothing but a meere command, 'tis likely hee saw no reason for it, yet see how God chargeth him, *hast thou eaten of that I commanded thee thou shouldst not eate ?* *Saul* thought he had good reason on his side, to spare the kine for sacrifice, but *did not I command thee the contrary ?* The servant is not to examine his masters ground, but to doe his will.

Lastly, wee must be subject to his providence, and all the passages of it. Looke what variety of conditions, of sicknesse and health, good report and ill report thou goest through. God requires that all thy affections should be subject without murmuring ; if he will have thee lye under an ill report without cause a long time, it is his providence

vidence, submit; and whereas men will say, if I were thus or thus in such a condition first, then I would be content; what is this, but to make his will *Regulam regulatam*?

The third thing are motives to be subject.

From the nature of subjection; which is as it was defined, that the inferiour ought to be subject to the superiour; so as there is reason for this, if thou be an inferiour to him, and when a man sees reason, he will not be stubborne. Now, that there is reason for this, looke through the whole universe. That which is most base is lowest, and if there should not be such a subordination, what confusion would there be, as if the waters should over-flow the earth, or the fire possesse the place of the ayre? As in the body of nature; so political; if servants should not be subject to their masters, inferiours to superiours, what confusion would it breed? 10. *Eccles. 5. 6. for the servant to be on horse-backe, and the master on foot*, this is an evill, and a folly. So in the body of man, for the humours to be predominant, it brings sicknesse and death; so in the soule, for reason to be below, and the affections above, what disorder is it? So that there is reason, that in all things the inferiour should be subject to the superiour.

Consider who it is you are to be subject to.

It is to him that is able to doe you much good, and one that is willing to recompence thee to the utmost. Why are men so willing to be subject to Kings, and doe them service? because they are able to advance them; and therefore men will doe

any base offices for them, even violate their consciences: but in being subject to God, thou shalt not be subject to base, but honourable services, and thou shalt get much by it also. As *Balak* said to *Balaam*, *am I not able to preferre thee?* so may I say of God, and of others, even of Kings, as *Saul* said of *David*, *Can David give you Vineyards? &c?* Can Kings give you what God can give you? why is there such seeking to the Court, but that men are perswaded of getting profit and honour? and is it not God that sets up whom he will, pulls downe whom he will? doth whatsoever hee will in the earth, and in the sea? which if considered, men would be ambitious of serving him.

2 Secondly, hee is able to doe you much hurt, and that is another reason of our subjection to Princes, and therefore, *1. Pet. 5. 6.* hee bids us humble our selves under his mighty hand; that is, God hath a mighty hand, able to bring you into subjection, and therefore doe it willingly, *Humble your selves.* Doe you provoke him to anger, are you stronger then he? is hee not able to bring you downe? In *Ezechiel* there be foure Emblemes of his power; God compares there great men to Eagles, the masters of all birds; to Cedars that over-shaddow all the trees of Eden; to Dragons, that doe live in the waters, and doe drinke it up as a river, and to an excellent Cherub; now God to shew his power, sayes, that hee will deplume that Eagle, loppe the boughes of that Cedar, uncover that Cherub; put a hooke into

into the nostrils of that Dragon, so that God is able to doe the greatest men in the world hurt.

Thirdly, God is exceeding munificent, his goodnesse is great. If one hath a father that is full of goodnesse, an ingenuous sonne would not disobey him, because hee would not grieve him; now God will spare thee, *as a father spares his sonne that serves him*: hee will keepe thee still in the house, notwithstanding all thy rebellions.

3

Last motive is taken from our selves. It is for thy good to be subject to him: which if men thoroughly apprehended, they would not sticke, though it were a thing burdensome to them. If a Physician prescribes thee an hard dyet, to which thou hast no good will in it selfe; yet if thou be told it is for thy good, then thou art willing; and thus it is with the Commandements: but say, is not liberty an excellent thing? is it not better to live as a man lists? indeed if the mind of a man were framed as it ought to be, it were so; but seeing thy heart is possessed with etroures, &c. it is not best for thee to be at liberty, for one that is well in his wits, it is good to be at liberty, but not for one in a frensie; againe for thee to follow thine owne will, is to subject thy selfe more to the disease, but when thou dost what God commands thee, thou dost follow the pre-script of the Physician. For every man lyes as it were *Inter morbum & medicum*; if thou subject thy selfe to God, thou growest out of bondage to

202262

to the disease to further life and liberty, but when thou obeyest thy selfe, thou art brought in bondage to sinne, which is the disease of thy soule. Now bondage properly is this; when one is subject to one that is not our proper Commander, or when it is to our hurts: and therefore now to be subject to a father is not bondage, so nor to God, he being our naturall and proper Commander. Now one of these two you must be subject to, either the law of sinne, or of righteousnesse. Consider now which of these is bondage, which liberty.

Every creature hath a certaine rule given it, and so long as it keepes close to that rule, so long it is well with it: and so it is with men, whilst they are subject to the Law, which is their proper rule; to be subject to the contrary rule, that is bondage. But thou wilt say, I finde it a pleasant life, to bee subject to my lusts: but what is the reason of that? because it is agreeable to the present disposition of thy soule, but yet know this, that thou hast another radicall disposition in thee, in which thou wert created, to which the Commandements are more pleasant, then the satsifying of thy lusts. As now take the constant disposition of thy body; meat and drink is pleasant to it, but indeed in a time of sicknesse, not meat, but something else is more pleasant; yet so as the pleasantnesse of meate to one in health, is the greater of the two. Now this is a rule in Philosophie, that those things that are agreeable to nature are *jucunda per se*: and all times,

times, the other not so, and but for a fit, and so now sinne is pleasing to thee, but whilst thou art in such a humour. Now the things that God commands agree to the first constitution of thy soule, and therefore they are the better choyce, and in themselves more pleasant, and the obedience to them, is like the obedience of the members to the head, but the obedience of them to sin is the wringing them the wrong way.

Againe, peace is pleasant. *Psalm. 133. 1. It is a pleasant thing for Brethren to dwell in unity.* Discords in a family are unpleasant. Now whilst thou obeyest sinne, it breakes thy peace with God thy head, and thou livest an unquiet life, but as it is, *Gal. 6. 16. as many as walke according to the rule of Gods Commandements, peace is upon them,* and that is pleasant. Againe, it brings Iesus Christ into the soule, and he brings ioy with him, for when he comes into the heart, hee comes as the Sunne into a roome with light, and joy, and peace. I find one similitude more in the words, to expresse our union with Christ: and indeed the Scripture is much in expressing of this union, now it is a sure rule, that what the Scriptures bestow much words on, wee should have much thoughts on, and what the Holy Ghost urgeth most, we should prize most, as in this union with Christ, which is the foundation of our Salvation and of all graces.

Now different similitudes in Scripture doe expresse some new thing, as is this, that hee is the head and Saviour of the body. It will bring to our minds some other differing notion concerning

202262

ning this union then the former did, it will bring new light that we shall see further into the riches of this glorious mysterie.

The point is, that Christ is the head, and Saviour of his Church, and of every member. I adde this last, for so you shall finde it. *1 Cor. 11. 3.* That the head of every man is Christ: and this similitude shewes that the union betwixt Christ and us, is more than the union of a politicke head and body, so as we are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, as it is in the thirtieth verse of this chapter.

1 In that Christ loves and cheriseth every one united to him, as every man doth his owne flesh. Put case a member bee more deformed than another, there be an ulcer in it; yet a man loves it, because it is his flesh.

2 Hee is sensible of all the paine, and ease they feelee, as the Head is, of what the Members doe.

3 Hee communicates Sence and Motion to every man; without him, every man being dead, and not able to moove a step, in the Wayes of God.

4 He guides, directs, counsels every member upon all occasions, suggests wisdom what to doe.

But there are three other speciall respects, in regard of which he is called a head.

1 In regard of authority. *1: Ephes. 22.* God hath appointed him over all things to be head, Hee hath committed the Kingdome of the Mediatourship to his Sonne,

In

In regard of preheminance. 1 Col. 18.

2

In regard of influence of life. Ephes. 1. 23. his headship is made to consist in this, in filling his body, which in it selfe is a dry empty thing, and he fills them all, that is, every corner, and secondly with all, that is all variety of graces; so as they have nothing, but what they have from him.

3

The use of these three in particular, Secondly, in that he is a head in generall.

If Christ be so ahead, as he is a Governour and commander; it is easy to know what followeth then; let us be obedient and live according to his lawes, in those doxologies which are given to Christ, This is one, *To him be al dominion*: al the dominion that is in parents over their children, Kings over their people, are but rivelets out of that Sea. In the 9. of *Isai. 6.* the *Government* is said to be upon his shoulder, so as he rules all the world, onely with this difference, that he rules his Church with an inclinative disposition, as the head rules the members, but others *with a rod of Iron*, so as he brings all under his feet, and makes them stoope, and it is profitable for us to consider what division wee are of; for First, there are some of the kingdome of his sonne, translated into his kingdome. 1 Col. others are as *Cain*, vagabonds, lawlesse persons, that are not the Lords portion, and though these doe what they list; yet thou must doe as by a rule, from morning till night, in all thy businesse, undertake no action but by rule: there is not the least action but there is rule for it in the generall

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202264

nerall find out that rule, so use recreations, eate and drinke by rule.

If you object, that there are some things which a man may doe *animi causâ*; so the Apostle sayes, hee would not for his mind sake, I answer, you must even doe these things by rule. Tis true that a man may have in his choice to doe a thing, or not to doe a thing; for then a thing is indifferent: yet there is a rule to be lookt to in these things, *viz.* That Christ hath given a man this liberty: so men should order their speeches by rule; not to be vaine at any time, not in the least word. But you will say, this is a bondage: Answer: no; but it is forthy benefit; for the more thou walkst by rule, the more peace shall be upon thee. It is observable, 9. *Esay* 7. that these two things are put together; *of the encrease of his government, and of his peace there shall be no end*: to this end, to shew that as his government encreaseth in mens hearts and is enlarged, so as a man is made more subject to him, so also peace increaseth. In those that are most subject, there is most peace: and therefore hee is called the Prince of peace; for where hee rules as a Prince, there is that peace which he, as a mighty Prince, is able to procure to you. And to this purpose is that copulation of being a head and a Saviour in the Text, as I have observed before: if any man goeth from out of his government, hee shall find thornes, unquietnesse, and restlesnesse of spirit, if they walke by the rule, they shall have perfect peace, perfect mercies: if you walke unevenly with him,

him, hee will walke unevenly with you.

Is he a head in regard of excellency; not onely because God hath put him into the highest place, but because hee hath a fitnesse in him, all fulnesse; choose him then, take him before any thing else; for he is the best, and will preponderate whatsoever coms in competition with him. There are no excellencies, that are in the creatures which are out of him, but all in him. And therefore thou must choose him altogether, and make him the adequate object of thy soule, in whom thou art fully satisfied: bring thy heart to this frame, to be content to be stript of every thing, thinking it enough to have the Lord; 2 Col. 10. *And yee are compleate in him, who is the head of all Principalitie and power*: his scope is this; in the 6. verse before, he had exhorted them, that as they had taken Christ, (it being the same word that is in *Iohn*, 1. 12.) so they would walke in him, being fully contented with him; and let no man deceive you in Philosophie, that is, whereas men teach you excellent rules of morall Philosophy; yet reckon not these as excellencies added to Christ, but abound you in faith in him, for we are compleate in him: if any thing were wanting in him, then indeed we might seek out to other things. Learn to apply this to your particular occasions; say, I care for no mans friendship, nor wealth; it is enough, I have the Lord alone; I am compleate in him, looke for all from him; and then you will doe all for him. Hee that lookes for any thing from the creature, will doe so much for it.

Every

202262

Every benefit hath an office joyned, and so much men serve sinne, as they looke for pleasure from it, and so much service as is done to the creature, so much is taken off from God; and therefore say, I will not apply my selfe to you, but to Christ. And so if a man be to preach the Gospell, he that thinketh himselfe compleate in Christ, will not care for mans day, so if a man come to some action of tryall, wherein he shall lose some speciall friends, and get great enemies, if hee thinke himselfe compleat in Christ, he cares not. So in walking in the exercise of a mans calling, if a man thinkes himselfe compleat in Christ, he will thinke it enough to doe his duty; so as men may receive profit by it, and as for wealth, hee leaves that to the Lord, in whom hee is compleat.

But you wili say, how shall I live in this world then? I have credit to looke to, and wife and children.

Answ. God is able to do abundantly for you, if you have him. When *Moses* was content to let *Pharaoh* goe, and his great place in *Egypt* goe, and so suffer affliction with the people of God, God made him a greater Prince then ever hee was; so Christ, because hee endured the shame, and the speaking against, and the meanest condition that ever man had, therefore *Phil.* God gave him a great name above all names. *Abraham* let his Country goe, but God gave him a greater Country, and in his seed made him heire of the world; so if a man be a Minister of the word; let him not think

think with himselfe, how to provide best for himselfe, but how he may doe most good; and therefore not to take care for preferment or maintenance, in the 10. of *Math.* 10. *Luke*, when Christ sent his Disciples out to preach the Gospell, Hee bids them *take no money, nor no scrippe*, to maintaine them, nor no staffe to defend them from injuries, nor salute no man by the way, that is, doe not stand upon officious complements to get friends. You goe about the Lords worke, and I will provide for you, and therefore hee repeates this 22. *Luk* 35. when he was going out of the world, asking them if when he did send them out thus, they did lacke any thing, to which they answered no. Then learne by this, not to looke after maintenance; and this may be said to every Minister of the Gospell; preferre Christ, and he will preferre you. Every one desires a preheminance, a place above his brethren; the way to get it, is to be for Christ: *Of his owne will he begot us, that we might be the first fruits of all the creatures.* When a man hath chosen Christ, then hee is made the chiefe of the creatures, hee excels all others, as Roses and Lillyes excell thornes; so that if you choose and make him your head, hee will make you the head and chiefe of all things else.

From this, that he is a head in regard of influence, a head that fills all in all; that then wee would be carefull to draw from him, that which may fill us, and this is the use is made of this 4. *Ephes.* 15, 16. *Let us follow the truth in love, that we may grow up in him in all things, who is the head, from*

whom the whole body fitly joyned together, &c. The scope of the Apostle is to shew us, wee should grow, and how to grow, adding this motive to it, to stirre them to it, that Christ is their head, able to fill every empty crevis, and that should stirre them up to bring their hearts to him, that so you may grow up into him, that is, when you heare hee is a head that fills you, stand not at a stay, but grow up to him, there being as great a necessity for you to grow, as for others to come in: and therefore (sayes he) continue not children: if they aske how they should grow up into him; hee bids them *follow the truth in love*, that is, as you get more light into divine truths, and have your hearts affected with them, which is meant by love, so much is added to you: grow then; for otherwise how is it said, that the word doth build us up? as *St. Paul*, when he told those that *he was to leave them*, and they knew not what to doe when he were gone, to grow, he tells them this, *I leave you to God, and the word of his grace* to build you up: now how doth the word do it, but by revealing truth, new truths? which if they affect the heart, men grow up into Christ.

In that it is said, grow up into him, it is added, to difference that growth which is out of him in morall vertues; men may grow in them, and yet not grow up into Christ: but to grow up into him, is to grow more emptied of our selves and selfe-conceits, and fuller of him, so as he may be greater in us; for wee define grace otherwise then the morall Philosophers define vertues; they

they define it to be that which frames the soule to right reason, that is, to do that which is best for himselfe and his converse with men; but wee grow in another manner, to be that which frames and exerciseth every faculty of the soule to the Lord, and therefore there is no growth in grace, unlesse it be into Christ, doing all for him, unlesse we be taken off of our owne bottome, and set upon him. Now there are things further mentioned in that place, as meanes of this growth.

To receive all from him, from whom as the words are, &c. and therefore to keepe the heart nigh to him; that therefore which hinders growth is that which causeth distance betwixt God and us. Now the cementing qualities that doe joyne us to him, are faith and love, and that which looseneth us from him is selfe dependance, and selfe seeking, and all things else which thrust in betwixt God and you, as vaine hopes and vaine feares.

Keepe in the fellowship of the Saints, for they receive from Christ onely, as they are knit and compacted together: if the branch be divided from the tree and the roote, there is no growth. Let them looke to it that take no heed of their company. There are many mutuall duties to be performed together, by which the Saints grow: be one of their fellowship in conference, prayer, &c. if thou wouldest grow.

By that which every joint furnissheth to us. There are certaine *Commisura* bands and sinewes, by

202262

which grace is conveyed, by which is meant all those *vehicula* of grace, all the ordinances of God: be therefore that prayes most, heares most conscionably, and is in company of those most which excell in grace, whence something will drop that may increase grace and truth, such men grow most; though Christ be the fountaine, yet grace is conveyed by these as the meanes: therefore using these meanes, looke up to him to open the fountaine.

4

There is an effectuall power, a nutritive faculty in every one that hath life in him, which is a meanes of growth, according to the effectuall working in the measure of every part, by which a man makes use of every thing suggested to him, still receives profit from the word read or preached, or from Gods providence, some nutriment from them all: as you say of good wits, that they make use of every thing, so of good hearts, and that is according to the measure in every part; yet so as the least bud hath this effectuall power in its measure to draw from the root, as well as the greatest branches; some have a greater measure, because they take in not for themselves, but digest and deliver it to others; for in the body there are some members, that receive from themselves and for distribution, as the liver, heart, &c. And therefore thinke with thy selfe, I have a greater degree in the Church of God, therefore I must looke to receive more then others, or else there will be an *'areff'n*. I must pray more and read more, that so growing more

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in thy selfe, thou maist be able to distribute unto others. Let me adde this, take heed you doe not dead this effectuall power, for then you will not be able to draw much, or else not to concoct it. You will say, how may it be deaded? by worldly mindednesse, or by Sinne not repented of.

This weakens, the nutritive faculty, the more spiritual every man is, the better conscience that he keeps, and that will quicken the nutritive faculty, for what makes a member to draw nourishment, but emptinesse and hunger? so that the more we thirst after other things, the lesse we shal draw from Christ.

The use is of Triall whether you be in Christ or no, by your obedience and subjection to him. The Church, that is, every member of it, is subject unto Christ, and obedient unto him in all things. That which God maketh a rule of his owne Judgment, as that by which he iudgeth of every man that is a sure rule for every man to judge himselfe by, That which we shall be judged by at the last day, is a sure rule to apply to our selves for the present. Now by our obedience and workes, hee judgeth us, *Hee will give to every man according to his workes. Rom. 2.* that is, he will not looke to their good meanings and profession, but to their actions and workes, because our real taking of Christ appeareth in them. *Isai. 1. 19. If yee consent and obey, yee shall eat the good things of the Land, that is, if yee will consent to take Iehovah for your Lord and King, if you give consent, there is the first thing. But that is not enough; but if you also*

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obey, the consent that standeth in the inward act of the mind, the truth of it will bee seene in your obedience, in the acts of your lives, if you consent and obey *you shall eat the good things of the land*, That is, you shall take of all that he hath, that is good and convenient for you, for then you are married to him in truth, and have an interest in all his goods. The Lord would have sacrifice exactly performed, but the prophets make light of that in comparison of obedience, and the complaint of the Lord is of your disobedience, you are a disobedient and rebellious people, *your necke is like an Iron sinew*, you plucke away the shoulder, and will not obey. It is not a sacrifice which was a typical taking of Christ, but obedience must goe with it, So in the new testament, the two maine things the Apostles beate upon, were Faith and new obedience, fruits worthy of amendment of life, *Acts 20. 21*. The Apostle summes all his preaching in these two things, repentance towards God, and Faith towards Iesus Christ, and he joynes them together, because they are never severed. That was his businesse, if you should have heard him conferre or preach, you should have heard him beat upon these two, Faith and obedience, or subjection to the commandements. So it was the scope of *John Baptist*, he preacht the baptisme of repentance, and the washing away of sinnes, now they would be ready to take the sweet, therefore he tels them they must be obedient, and he urgeth it on particulars, as they that are souldiers must offer no wrong to any, and so of the rest

rest, The Lord will not take any thing of an enemy, a stranger. 2 Cor. 8. 12. *Hee that giveth almes, and giveth not his person first to the Lord, the Lord accepteth it not,* but yet on the other side, workes must justifie our faith: it is but an empty faith, except it hath an actuall real obedience accompanying it. It is a dangerous rocke to think our sins are forgiven, and wee have accepted Christ, and have good meanings, and yet we have no obedience accompanying this: He that is in Christ hath crucified the flesh, and walketh after the spirit, and he that is in Christ, is subject unto him in al things. *Aristotle saith,* not he that had a strong body, but he that runne well, had the crowne in the *Olympian* games, it was not an athleticall ability, but he that wrestled best: and it is the similitude the Apostle himselve alludes to, and takes up 1 Cor. 9. towards the end. Exhorting to strictnesse of obedience unto Christ, as without which a man will lose his labour. It is well expressed in the parable of the sonnes, one said he would goe into the vineyard, there were good intentions; the other said he would not: he that said he would and went not, went besides the reward, and hee that said he would not, but went, it was hee that received the reward. It is not good desires, but actuall performing of obedience that shal provide a Crowne for you. And good reason why tryall should be taken by this, for tryall is in difficult things. To professe and know much are easy, but to bring your affections into subiection, to wrestle with lusts, to crosse your wils, and your selves,

upon every occasion, this is hard. The Lord looketh that in our lives wee should be serviceable to him, and usefull to men; that which is within, the Lord and our brethren are never the better for it; but the outward obedience flowing thence, glorifies God, and doth good to man. The Lord will have this done. What else is the end of our preaching, our planting, and watering, but that the trees may be filled with sap? And what is the end of that sap, but that the tree may bring forth fruit? what careth the husband-man for leaves or barren trees? not onely the thornes, are cast into fire, but barren trees. Therefore looke to your fruits, and deceive not your selves. It is a common error for men to thinke their estates good, when in the meane time they walke after the stubbornnesse of their hearts: they that doe the will of the Lord shall be saved. What is the end of every grace, but to mollifie the heart, and make it plyable to some commandement or other? Looke how many commandements, so many graces there are in vertue and efficacy, although not so many severall names are given them. The end of every such grace is to make us obedient, as the end of temperance is chastity; to bow the heart to those commands, *be yee sober, &c. not in chambering and wantonnesse, &c.* When the Lord commandeth us not to be angry with our brother, the end of meekenesse, and why the Lord infuseth it, is to keepe us from unadvised, rash anger, so saith the end of it, is to take Christ Jesus, to make us obedient

dient to the command of the Gospell, which commands us to beleeeve in him; so as all graces do joyne together, but to frame and fashion the soule to obedience. Then so much obedience as is in your lives, so much grace in your hearts, and no more: therefore aske your hearts, how subject you are to the Lord in your lives; it was the counsell that *Francis Spira* gave to them about him, saith he, *Learne al of me, to take heed of severing faith and obedience*; I taught justification by faith, but neglected obedience, and therefore is this befallen me. I have knowne some godly men whose comfort on their death beds, hath beene not from the inward acts of their mind, which apart considered, might be subject to misapprehensions, but from the course of obedience in their lives issuing thence. Let Christians looke to it, that in all their conversation, as they stand in every relation, as Scholars, trades-men, husbands, wives, looke to this, that when they come to dye, they have beene subject in all things: this will afford solid comfort. What will you say, when Satan chargeth you with this? it is true you have large promises, and *hee that beleeveth shall be saved*, but then you must have beene obedient and bring forth fruits; and when you looke upon your lives, and find not these fruits, where are you? But you will say then, there is none but may doubt himselfe, for who can say his obedience is perfect? I answer, it is not so much the perfection as the sincerity that is required. But how shall we know that, you will say?

First

First consider, whether thou be obedient in every thing. This is in the words of the Text, therefore I mention it first, he that hath taken Christ, there is never a commandment, but he is subject to it: though he faileth in the performance of the commandements, yet never a one but he is subject to; as for example, the Lord hath commanded *to sanctifie the Sabbath, not to forsake the fellowship of the Saints; to pray continually; to take heed how we heare; to wash our hearts from evill thoughts and lusts.* When an obedient heart, one that hath taken Christ truly, heares these commands, he is obedient to every one of them; hee goeth about the businesse, as an obedient servant about his masters service; though he may be overtaken with negligence and some contrary passion, yet he goeth about it. I meane, hee doth it as well as he is able. Another will not set himselfe to doe the businesse, but is ready to expostulate the matter with God, and say, the commandement is too strict, or else he refuseth by plaine stubbornes. As for example, that commandement, *take heed how you heare,* that is, let not one instruction fall to the ground, see that you worke it upon your hearts; a disobedient heart goeth not about this, he lendeth his eares for an houre; but when the Sermon is done, there is an end: so that *other, to pray continually,* may be he prayeth not alone, nor with his family, or if both, yet in a slight and negligent manner, as good never a whit, as never the better: so also *let your communication bee alwayes gracious;* such a one thinkes it a needlesse thing

thing to be so strict and indiscreet, he is not, nor will not be subject: this is disobedience. Marke the generality, and thinke it no more then needs, when the Scripture there saith, *wee must be subject to him in every thing*; that is, not onely to the maine commandement, but to every part of it: Hee that hath said, *thou shalt not commit adultery*, hath said, *thou shalt not have an adulterous heart, or eye, or thought, or dalliance*. Now if thou be subject to the maine, if thou neglect the smallest as thou countest them; thou art disobedient, and thou art one to whom God will render vengeance, *2 Thes. 1. 7*. For it is to them that know not the Lord, or that will not obey him, though they know that he will do this unto them, ver. 8. and I aske you if you know not, that there is such a commandement as this, *redeeme the time, &c*? where is thy obedience to it, thou that triflest away thy precious time, and makest no conscience of it? If the Lord hath said, *he that doth his worke negligently, shall be cursed*, what shalt thou be, that dost it not at all? Students that lose their time, and will not be obedient to that command, hath not the Lord commanded you here to to be subject in all things? so he hath said, *for sake not the fellowship of the Saints*, that is, the element you should live in; and it is not enough onely to abstaine from evill company, but to frequent good: so for your speeches being gracious alwayes: are not these commandements of the Lord? where is thy obedience therein, when thy company is idle, thy speeches vaine? Likewise, *pray continually*, that is, at least twice a day;

a day; it must be frequent and fervent too: when no paines is taken herein, it is a signe you are disobedient. Thus you may examine your selves by other commandements, and pitch upon that which you are most ready to faile in. Now when I urge this as a necessary concomitant of grace, the meaning is not, that it is a *perfect* subjection in every thing, but such, that a man doth goe about it with all his soule, and make it his worke. A mans heart may be a Temple for the holy Ghost, yet evill thoughts and lusts may passe through, but there is not a table set up there for them; sinne hath not quiet possession in them, they set up no idoll of riches, or pleasure, though they may be overtaken and faile in giving due respect to these commands, yet they draw not out, they spinne not the threed of any sinne thoroughout the course of their lives. Whatever it be, if a man lye in it from day to day, it is disobedience. And your purposes must be resolute, the divorce must be full without any secret lingrings after the lust forsaken, though by an accident you may be overtaken by it, yet this is your resolution, there is sincerity seene, another giveth them over but for necessity, with a moneths mind to returne to them againe; as *Phaltiel*, that when the King sent for his wife, sent her, because there was a necessity of it, but yet went weeping after her, 2 *Sam.* 3. 16. so it is with us, we let goe our sinnes, but goe weeping after them: the heart is not cleare of them. And consider well the ground of it, why it must be in every thing,

in thoughts and words, and why disobedience in the smallest commandement, as in idle words, not indeavouring to keep your hearts cleane, your affections pure, doth thus put a man out of the state of grace, and that such have not taken Christ, is because all the commandements are equally commanded, and though they fall upon differing objects, & so are different, in respect of the Commanders will, and therefore by the same reason, a disobedience to the smallest, is a disobedience as well as to the greatest. Now the threatnings are against disobedient persons, because every disobedient person casteth away the Lord, as *Saul* did, that is, he refuseth to have him his governour. Now he that doth so, cannot be saved: for he hath not taken Christ for his head and husband, *Whosoever shall keepe the whole Law, and yet faileth in one point, he is guilty of all*, that is, it is a disobedience to the Commander, in what commandement soever it be, though but in one thing, thou hast refused the Law-giver, and art a rebell against him: standing out against any one thing, makes a rebell against a Prince, if he stubbornly refuse to obey in one thing, as well as in a thousand.

Lam. 2. 10.

A second rule to try our sincerity of subjection, is to consider the manner of it. Consider whether you be subject, as the wife is to her husband, which is the maine thing intimated in this subjection here: There is a great difference between being subject in the outward man out of necessity, and to obey from the heart the forme of doctrine, &c. It is one thing to be subject as a servant, another

202262

another thing to be subject as a wife, who is subject, not of coaction or necessity, but freely and willingly out of love, because she would not grieve her husband, the Saints delight lyes in communion with God, so as their hearts are not at rest, when they stand not in good tearmes with him; they cannot let any uneven reckonings to lye betweene him and them; they love him, and therefore dare not disobey him. And this ariseth from a perswasion, what ever hee commandeth or inflicteth it is good, and just, and equall: then he willingly obeyes and suffers. Thus the obedience of Christ, you shall see what kind of one it was, *shall I not drink the cup which my Father hath given me?* that is, I would not drinke this bitter cup, not onely because of necessity I must, but seeing my Fathers will is I should drinke it, and he hath prepared it for me, I will drinke it. Hence many a woman will say, shall I not doe that which my husband would have me to doe? hee is wise and loves me, and hee hath reason for what he commands: others of the Sts. have yeelded obedience thus unto the Lord, as *Eli*, when newes was brought to him that all his house should be cut off; saith he, *it is the Lord, let him doe as seemeth good in his eyes*, it is the Lord that loveth me, taketh care of me, let him doe what pleaseth him, I am content, and willing to subject my selfe. Another may be subject to his commandements, but it is of necessity; on the contrary, the Saints who love and prize communion with him, and would not lose it, would have no interruption.

So

So also *Iob 2. 10.* *We have received good of the Lord, and shall we not receive evill?* as if hee should have said, surely the Lord would not have done me so much good as already I have received from him, if his purpose had not beene good towards me; and therefore if some evill by his providence doe befall me, should I not beare it quietly? If it had beene from an enemy, hee would have beene discontent, but comming from the hand of a friend, he was willing with it. Indeed, holy men may be sometimes in a mist, and not consider the reason of the Lords counsels, as *Paul*, when he was *buffeted by the messenger of Satan*, hee was somewhat discontent, till the Lord made knowne to him, that hee was mistaken in it, that though he tooke it for poyson, yet it was a medicine; he thought it came from Satan; but when hee saw it came from one that loved him, and it was for his good; that the grace of God and his power might appeare, he willingly submitted, yea, hee rejoyced in it. A good conscience is not onely to doe that which is commanded; it is possible for him that hath no grace, not to dare to doe somethings which are evill in secret; but a good conscience is, when a man is not willing to displease the Lord, he dareth not doe it, because hee loveth the Lord. He stands upon such tearmes with him, as a chaste wife with her husband: therefore hee will looke to make his course even, and to please the Lord in all things.

The third rule to try it by. Consider whether thy subjection be as to the Lord, or no, for his sake

sake: as here it is said, *As the Church is subject to Christ*. Many thinke their obedience to the commandements is to the Lord, when they are deceived. It was *Sauls* case, it was a faire pretence to spare the cattell, for Sacrifice for the Lord: but it was but a pretence; for it was for himselfe indeed, that he spared them. So *Balaam* spake faire, when he said, he would speake nothing but what the Lord should say to him, and that hee would not curse the people of *Israel*, except God bad him curse them; but it was not for any love to God, but he had an eye to himselfe and his owne honour, hee knew it was in vaine to curse where God did blesse, and so he thought thus with himselfe, if he should curse them without the command of the Lord, hee should but discredit himselfe, and lose his labour, wages and all, for his curse would take no effect: therefore hee would not goe till God commanded him to goe: likewise it may be, hee desired to dye the death of the righteous, so as all was out of selfe-love. Likewise *Amaziah* was subject to the Lord, walking in all the wayes of *David*, but all was done to other ends then *David* did, but you will say, it is hard to discern, when a man doth obey the commandement, whether it be to the Lord or no: how therefore shall we know it?

Ansiv.

Consider after any failing, in thy obedience or commission of any sinne, what it is that troubleth thee, the offence against God or the harme, discredit, &c. redounding unto thy selfe? You shall see the falsenesse of *Saul* his heart in this

this, the disobedience of the Lord never troubled him, though he seemed awhile affected with offending the Lord, but hee after shewed that it was only the losse of his credit which he was tender of; for when *Samuel* would have left him, and he though some dishonour would redound to him, that was it that troubled him; hee desires not so much that God would pardon, as that *Samuel* would honour him; come sayes he with me, and let us goe and offer Sacrifice, *honour me before the people.* It was not his sinne and disobedience, but the losse of his credit that hee stood upon. The contrary you may see in *David*, see his carriage under the guilt of his murther and adultery, for which he was so greatly afflicted: but how much did he slight all other things? his affliction he did beare well enough, when his owne sonne had abused his wives; this did not perplex him, it was his sin troubled him as appears by that Psalm he made upon that occasion, in which you have not a word of his affliction, but his sin; it was that he was tender of. Find out therefore where thy tendernes for sin is; as a Smith, when he would trie the hoof of a horse, look where it shrinketh, that is the tender part, so see what shrinketh and galleth thy heart most; if it be sinne and offending the Lord, it is a signe thy eye was upon the Lord: but when thou art tender of losses and crosses, and discredit to thy selfe, it is an ill signe, shewing thou respectest thy selfe. *David* taxeth himselfe in those things which were counted no sinne by men, but an honour; as the cutting of *Sauls* lap

20276

of his garment ; it was an honour to him to come so neere his adversary, and but cut off the lap of his garment. So in numbering the people, it was no outward shame or evill, but the sinne that troubled him, Lord sayes he, *strike me, for these sheepe, what have they done ?*

A fourth rule whereby thou maist try thy subjection to the Lord, is by thy disobedience to all others; it is a rule may seeme somewhat remote at the first hearing, but it is such a rule of trying subjection, that I find in the Scripture, *St. Paul* when he would expresse his subjection, he doth it by way of opposition. *If I should yet please men, I were not the servant of Christ*: it is a good argument of our being subject to the Lord, when we care not for displeasing others, *Rom. 2. 8.* as not obeying the truth, is joyned with obeying unrighteousnesse, so as the contrary, obeying the truth is alwayes joyned with disobeying, all unrighteousnesse, *1am. 4. 7.* they are put together. *Submit your selves to the Lord, and resist the Devill.* He that is most subject to the Lord, is a most untractable man to man, and to all creatures else, upon every occasion, because *the common course of the world* is contrary to holinesse, *Ephes. 2. 1.* which causeth others to quarrell so much with them as they doe; and this ariseth from their obedience to the Lord. It is common amongst us, when wee see a man easie, plyable, tractable, ready to give satisfaction and content to men, to commend him for it, as a good disposition in them; but to be so in all things, even in sinning against

against God, this though it is pleasing to men, it is abominable to God; it is an evident case, that they which would not doe a thing if left to themselves because unlawfull, yet to give satisfaction to friends, to their company, as *Herod* did, they will, that is a signe of disobedience; the more waxy, the heart is to men, the more hard to the Lord. It is a signe of pusillanimity in Christians that yeeld so much to men, they forget themselves; there is a certaine magnanimity which Christians should maintaine: wee are Kings, the Sonnes of God, therefore what is the countenance or discountenance of man? wee should carry our selves as greater men than they, wee should learne *regnum gerere in pectore*, to carry a kingdome in our breasts. It is a common saying among men, such a man understands himselfe well, that is, he understandeth his place, his dignity, and carryeth himselfe according to it. In this wee are ready to goe too farre, but we should learne to doe thus in our obedience to God. The truth of a wifes chastity, is seene in the peremptory denyall of all that sollicite her; the more peremptory wee are in such denyals of the creatures, the more subject we are to the Lord.

Lastly, you shall try it by this, consider what you doe in those things that above all others you would not be subject in, single out that sinne that is dearest to thee; though a man would be obedient in all else, yet in some things to be restrained it goes to his heart, something is more peculiar, and is that he fancies, and it goeth more neere un-

to him to obey in that, then in any other thing. When the Lord would trie *Abraham*, he tries him in that which he was most unwilling to part with. Now, sayes he, *I know that thou fearest me*, For I have tried thee in that which I know thou lovedst dearly, and yet thou art content to part with it for my sake. Make the same question to you: look what it is, that above all others you would not be subject in, whether it be a matter of credit, of estate, or a lust that sitteth close, if thou wilt try whether thou be subject, so if for his sake thou canst obey the commandement, which is against it that crosseth it, for such a command the Lord gave to *Abraham*, and hee did obey it: hee that taketh Christ, taketh him for a Lord and a Saviour.

Quest

But you will say, these rules are good, but I find my self wanting, I would bee subject, but I cannot bring my Heart unto them, what meanes should I use for the doing of this?

Ans.

For this I will give some helps, for the end of these rules of tryall, is not so much to shut men out, or discourage them, but the end is, that finding themselves wanting, they may bee stirred up the more to be diligent in the prosecution of the meanes, and so grow up to perfection.

The meanes to be used are these.

First be diligent in observing where thy heart is not subject. Diligent observance of the flesh in us that is ready to rebell, when wee take least notice of it, this is the first meanes. There is no worke we goe about, but the flesh hath an hand in it.

it. There is some commotion and rebellion goes along with the best worke we doe, now to see this is a great help to obedience. Wee are not so much overcome by it, as by our owne inobservancie. The flesh is an enemy, and *nihil in hoste despiciendum*, sleight nothing of an enemies that may hurt thee, take heed the flesh deceive thee not, it is an enemy: suspect thine owne heart upon every occasion; for it is ready to deceive thee; especially in things that are lawful, there thou must have a diligent eye, that there bee no rebellion, that thou goe not beyond thy bounds.

Secondly, labour to have thy heart and reason convinced and perswaded that it is best for thee to be subject to the Lord: the Lord ruleth no where as a King, but where hee rules first as a Prophet, that is, except he first perswade the heart by an inward enlightening, that it is best for the heart to be subject, the will and the affections will never yeeld. Therefore if there be any commandement wherein thou findest a difficulty, arme thy selfe with reasons out of Scripture, get those weapons the Apostle speakes of, 2 Cor. 10. *The weapons of our warfare are not carnall, but mighty through God, bringing into captivity every thought to the Obedience of Christ*, that is, seeke out the reasons the Scripture giveth against such a sinne, and for to perswade the heart to obedience, for spirituall reasons only will work, and are mighty, morall reasons and arguments from respects to thy selfe, for feare of Hell, and for desire of Heaven and the like, they may restrain the outward man, but they cannot

202262

bring the inward man into a full subjection: but spirituall reasons will make thee subject, and to *obey from the heart*: and yet this is not enough, they *must be mighty through God*: the Lord must have the setting them on, they must be brought home and applyed by him. One may have many good reasons to move him to be subject to such a commandement, but except they be brought home to the conscience, by the Lord, they doe no good: therefore saith the Apostle, they are mighty through God to bring downe the strong holds, and false reasonings in the understanding, for they are these strong holds: where ever disobedience is, it ariseth from some lust, and wheron is this lust grounded, but upon some false conceit, and reasoning in the understanding? Now these spirituall reasons doe dissolve them: and when you see the vanity of the conceit, the lust vanisheth, when thou seest thy error, the lust will bee gone, and then the mind obeyeth easily. It then runneth in the wayes of Gods commandements, as a wheele that is well oyled. First then you must observe narrowly, and strive to discern betweene the flesh and spirit, which are as close as the bones and marrow, as the inwardest parts, they are so mixed together, there is such a conjunction between the flesh and spirit in every action, as is between the marrow and bones; but you must labour to discern betweene them, and that is the use you must make of all the knowledge you get by the word of God: And then Secondly, thou must have a special care, and still labour with thy mind, rea-
son,

son, and understanding, to be perswaded that it is best to be obedient.

And then the third and last thing is, to do somewhat with the affections, that is, to exercise and accustom thy stubborne affections to obey: the continuance in doing good, doth subject the affections; for as the Apostle speakes, *Heb. 5. 14.* of some, *That by reason of use have their wits exercised to discern good from evill*, that is, men being occupied in spirituall reasons, and truths, holy conferences, &c. they are able to discern truths. So it is in the affections; for, as exercise in these things makes the understanding ready to discern, so exercise makes the will and affections as ready to be subject, for it hath the same force in one part of the soule, that it hath in another: therefore the Lord leadeth us into variety of conditions, to exercise such and such graces, that wee may be subject to him in all things, for the image of God serveth but to bring the soule into obedience to God, as it did in Adam in paradise. Now therefore, God leads us into another place, and state and condition of life, that such a grace may be exercised in us. As the Apostle saith, *James 1. 2.* *Be glad when you fall into many temptations.* Sometimes he bringeth sicknesse, sometimes disgrace, sometime poverty, sometime affliction in children, wives, or one thing or other upon us, and all this to exercise our graces. And what is the end of this exercise, but to bow the heart to subjection, that we may be ready to obey him in all things? Now if thou wouldest exercise thy selfe

202262

in this manner, consider wherein thou art ready to disobey, and say: I see I want such a grace, and am ready to disobey in such a particular, I will resolve to practise the contrary. As if a man bee subject to anger, and want meeknesse, say, well, I see I am too much subject to anger. Therefore I will set upon the exercising of this grace of gentlenesse, and meeknesse, I will not be angry with the meanest of my servants. Thus if wee would doe, it would save us much affliction, which otherwise the Lord is forced to bring on us for this, to make us subject to him.

Object

But you will say it is grace that doth it: how can this custome that is but the act of a man doe it then?

Answ.

It is true, it is grace that doth it, but yet it is the exercise of that grace that doth it too. *Heb.* 5. 11, 12, 13. And that, as it encreaseth and enlargeth grace, and intendeth those habits which we have, and makes them stronger: it is indeed those infused qualities of grace planted in the faculties of the soule that bring it in subjection: and this custome doth but stirre up and encrease, and intends them, but yet this exercise where graces are first wrought, will encrease them and make them strong, through the assistance of Christ accompanying it. Thou shalt find this exercise will make thee strong in grace: the joynts of the body bent to such a course, and often employed in it, doe get a habit. So it is with the Soule. Other Yoakes the more they are borne, the more they weaken, but the more you beare the Yoake of Christ,

Christ, either in doing or suffering, the more able you are to doe it.

Another use that we may make of this is, that we should be from hence stirred up to consider that great privilege we have from Christ, for if he be a head to us, hee is our guide, hee is so an head to us, as an husband is to the wife. Now the husband is the guide of her youth, and so Christ is our guide. When a woman is young and not able to guide herselfe, shee had need have a guide: such is the case of every man naturally: But Christ, when a man is in him, becomes a guide unto him, or as the Head guideth the rest of the members, so doth the Lord all that belong to him. This is a privilege not thought of among us. When wee thinke of the other privileges, this of the guidance of Christ is forgotten of us. Therefore I will stand upon this great benefit, which al have that are ingrafted into Christ: now he guides them in all their wayes,

First by enlightening them, so as when others are in darkenesse, they have their eyes in their head, and see the way before them, when as all others are blind, and want either light, or else eyes to see withall.

Againe, he sends his spirit to bee a remembrancer to them in ambiguous and difficult cases, to shew them the way they are to take, and hee brings som prevalent arguments and reasons to mind, to move us to doe this or that, which would otherwise have bin forgotten; and to shew us the inconveniences that will follow of doing this or that

that which would otherwise have been hid from us.

3 He stirreth by our consciences which are appointed to be the immediate guide of us, and the Lords deputy, whereas otherwise they would either be still, or guide amisse.

4 By taking from us wrong guides, false opinions, strong, unruly, and inordinate affections, and instead of them he puts a right guide into our hearts, rectifies our judgements, puts in holy affections, which are the rudder of the soule, that turne it this way and that way. Thus there is a secret guidance, though we know it not, that the Saints have from the Lord in all their wayes. This is a great privilege: For when a man is *inops consilii*, in a straight and exigents, and knowes not which way to goe, when if hee should take the wrong way, it might be his undoing, then to have a guide, what a great privilege is it? When *David* was in *Keilah*, and heard that *Saul* would come downe thither. *1 Sam. 23.* hee knew not what to doe, whether to goe or stay; then the Lord guided him. So *Abraham* his servant, when he went for a wife, for his masters son, he knew not which way to goe for a wife for him, nor whom to take, then did God send his Angell to guide him, as *Abraham* had foretold him before hee went; hee told him *the Angell of the Lord should goe before him.* The want of this you may see in *Rehoboam*, who was in a great streight, when he asked counsell of the young men, but the Lord would not guide him, and therefore he did that which was his ruine. So

Absolom

Abfolon when he was in *Bivio*, not knowing which of the counsell given him to take, the Lord would not guide him, having a purpose to destroy him. So it is with us, there are often cases fall out wherein guidance is requisite, as in the changing our estate by marriage, place of living, the choyce of our callings, wherein to be guided or misguided, is our making or undoing. There is no day, wherein wee have not need of his guidance, in regard of one occasion or other: now to have this privilege to goe to the Lord freely, and aske counsell of him, and to be sure to have a ready answer from him, it is a great privilege. *David* in al his streights went to the Lord to aske counsell, and the Lord gave him counsell: *saul* went, and the Lord would not answer him by *Vrim* or *Thummin*, nor dreames, nor any way. The case of all that are in Christ is like the case of *David*, if they goe to him, the Lord hath bound himselfe to answer them; for they have some interest in the wisdom of Christ. But the case of the other, is like the case of *Saul*, he sends them away without, because they are strangers to him, and therefore he is not bound to answer them. And that you have such an interest consider 1 *Corin.* 1. 30. *But you are of him in Christ Iesus, who is made unto us wisdom*, that is, God the Father hath given him to us to teach us, to make us wise, to guide and direct us in difficult cases, when we cannot instruct our selves. The like to this is that *Isai.* 9. 6. *Unto us a child is born &c.* But what are the benefits wee shall have by that child? First he shall doe miracles, wonderfull

202262

full things among you, for *his name is wonderfull*. Secondly, hee undoubtedly shall bee your *Counsellour*, that is, I have given him to you, that when you want counsell and direction, you may goe to him, For I have given him to you, for that end. This we may as truly expect of him, as the Iewes did it of the *Messiah*, as appears by that speech, *Ioh. 4. 25. I know well that when the Messiah is come, he will tell us all things*. This was the common opinion of the people: the Iewes did expect this from him, so may wee: and therefore upon any exigent goe thou and say, Lord, thou hast given me thy Sonne, and him to be wisdom to mee, and appointed him to be my counsellor, and I have need of counsell and direction, and therefore Lord give me an answer, and direction. If wee would presse him thus, he could not deny us. Besides, in that Christ hath made himselfe our head, it is his office, hee hath undertaken it, it belongeth to him, to guide his Church and every member of it, and can hee faile in that belongeth to him?

That which sets the price on this privilege; is the need which we have of it, none being able to guide himselfe. The principle of guidance is resident in the head, and is communicated to the members but upon occasion. As it is thus in the naturall body, so that faculty of directing us is in Christ, and is communicated to us but upon occasion, as wee need it: hence every man walketh so wisely upon every occasion as God will guide and direct him to doe, in such a time, and

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in such circumstances; therefore wisemen, we see are sometimes insatuated, take a foolish course, that a stander by, who is farre inferiour to them, sees plainly this to be an unwise course, this the Lord doth, that they may know, *the Lord is onely wise.* as *1 Tim. 1.* Which consider, and it will be a great helpe to make us prize this privilege. Where is any man but is too well conceited of his owne wisdom? but to thinke God is onely wise, and that himselfe hath not a beame nor a sparke of wisdom, it is hard to perswade a man of this, but it is evident the Lord is onely wise.

For first, none can give counsell, except he knoweth the whole compasse of a businesse, hee that knoweth but part is not fit to give counsell: they that looke but upon few things, but upon a corner of a businesse, and not round about it, are apt to mistake: now who knoweth a businesse thus, but the Lord above? our knowledge even in practical matters, in our owne businesse, is but in part, as well as in things heavenly.

Besides, Secondly our consolations depend commonly on these two things, First the knowledge of the secrets of mens hearts, with whom we have to doe. Secondly of the future contingent events, which are to come, and to know neither is in our power, but it is the Lord only that knoweth the secrets of these mens hearts, with whom wee have to doe, as also the contingent things that are to come.

When the Lord would have *David* goe out of *Keilah*

202262

Keilah, saith David, wil the Lords of Keilah deliver me up? David knew not their hearts, nor no man knew, but the Lord onely knew they would deliver him up into the hands of Saul, 1 Sam. 23. 11. 12. and he told him, they would doe it. And againe, he asked whether Saul would come downe to Keilah, it was *futurum contingens* a contingent thing, and no man could tell whether he would or not; but the Lord told him, that he would come downe to destroy Keilah; if any other had known these two things, he might have counsel'd David. Now our guidance then in such things dependeth upon the knowledge of those two things, which yet are not in our power to know, but onely in the power of God, and therefore wee are not able to guide our selves. It is said, Col. 2. 3. *that in him are hid all the treasures of wisedome and Knowledge*; And they are so in Him, that they are not out of Him.

Obiect.

But men have naturall wisedome you will say. It is true, but they have it from Christ. All the light that ever was in the world, even in those which knew not Christ, it came all from him. As Ioh. 1. 5. *The light shined in the darknesse*, that is, in the darke places of the world, and not onely in Goshen, even since the beginning of the world, and the darkenesse comprehended it not, and in that sence it is he who enlighteneth every man that comes into the World. But put the case you could find out right counsells, or you had a man like Achitophel, whose counsell was as the oracles of God, and who were able to direct you, yet to take this counsell is not

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202262

in your owne power, it must be given you. That which *Solomon* sayth of the foole, *he hath a price in his hand, but hee hath no heart*, may be said of good counsell, there is oftentimes a price put into our hands, as was into *Absolons*, and *Rehoboams* hands, but we are not able of our selvs to take it: therfore saith the Apostle to *Timothy*, *2 Tim. 2. 7.* having counselled him what to doe, *consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in al things.* As if he should say, I have given thee good counsell: but there must be another counsellor, therefore I beseech the Lord to give thee understanding to open thine eyes, to see the rectitude of this counsell, and enable thee to apply it, and take it. *Nemo per se sapit*, no man by himselfe is able to counsell himselfe, there must be both a secret light, and eyes within to direct us. Many times wee refuse the best, and pitch upon the worst. *Ier. 10. 23.* *The way of man is not in himselfe, It is not in man to direct his wayes*, as if he had said, it is true, for the most part, men pitch wel enough upon the journies end, and aime at happinesse; but how to direct their steps, and to attaine that end, it is not in them; therefore Lord I beseech thee (sayes he) to guide us and direct us for the best. It is every mans case, his wayes are not in his owne power, hee is not able to see what is best and worst, and to chuse the right way, and if hee could in the generall, yet we had need of continuall guidance in the severall particular passages of our lives. We are at a stand at every turning we come at, and like a man in a wilderness know not which way to goe, except
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we have a guide at every step. *Dan. 5. 23. Hee is the God in whose hand, thy breath is, and all thy wayes &c. this is a thing we doe not consider.* Wee thinke indeed our lives are in Gods hand, and that matters of greater moment, are of his disposing; but that every step we take should depend on him, this is that we consider not of, a man takes not a step either into good or evill, into prosperity or adversity, but the Lord guideth that step. Therefore consider your great privileges, who have the Lord for your head, your guide, and your counsellor, and as you must know this privilege, so you must make use of it, for all those our privileges we have in Christ, were not declared that you should gaze upon them onely, know them and no more: Therefore goe to the Lord for counsell, wisdom and direction upon all occasions.

Quest.

You will say, but how shall we doe to obtaine it? For this I will give you these rules.

Answ.

First, thou must acknowledge thine owne inability, that thou art not able to guide thy selfe. *James 1. 5. If any lacke wisdom, let him aske, &c.* his meaning there is, not so much to shew that some men want wisdom, others not, but the meaning is, till a man sees he wants it, hee is not fit to aske it, neither will the Lord be ready to give it. *1 Corin. 3. 18. Hee that is wise, must become a foole to be wise.* It is true also here, thou must cease from thine owne wisdom, thou must confesse thou art not able to guide thy selfe, and that therefore because thou wantest wisdom, thou askest it of him. *Psal. 25. 9. Hee will teach the humble his way, and guide*

guide the meeke in Iudgement, that is, those that see their owne emptinesse, how unable they are to guide themselves, such he is ready to teach in the way they should chuse.

Secondly thou must also aske it of the Lord. You may read how God used *David* to this course from time to time, and put him oft to a stand when he fled from *Saul*, purposely that hee might bee accustomed to aske counsell of the Lord upon all occasions. Therefore let us learne so to doe, in any hard case, when we know not which way to turne us, to goe to the Lord and say, thou art my husband, my head, my father, and whither the should children goe for counsell but unto their Fathers, and the wife but unto her husband? Now Lord, counsell mee and direct me what to doe in this case. If you doe thus, will the Lord deny you? no, why saith hee, you, if your Children aske you bread, will you give them a stone? If they aske fish, will you give them a serpent? So I say to you, if you aske him counsell, will he give you poison? will he turne you into a wrong way and misguide you when you aske the right? No.

Thirdly you must aske in faith, that is added in *S. James 1. 6*. So as to rest and rely upon him. Thus hee commanded his Disciples, that when they should be brought before counsellis and rulers of the Synagogues, they should take no thought what to say, what was the reason but this, I will have you rest upon me, for guidance and assistance? at that time I will suggest to you whatsoever is needfull upon such an occasion.

20226 a

Now though that was extraordinary, yet it holds thus farre in ordinary times and cases, that though you may use the best meanes you can, and take the best consultations, yet so as still to trust more to your prayers, and on God for wisdom and direction then to your owne consultations, and the meanes which you have used, say as *Iehosaphat* did, although we use meanes, yet *our eyes are toward thee*; it is a prevalent argument which *Asa* used to the Lord. 2 *Chron.* 14. 11. Lord (saith hee) it is nothing with thee to helpe with many, or with no power, helpe us O Lord our God, for we rest on thee, and in thy name are wee come against this great multitude. As if hee should say, I have provided an army, made all things ready, but I rest upon thee for helpe; therefore the Lord was present with him, gave him the victory: so wee should goe to the Lord and say, we have used the counsell of our best friends, and the best meares we can, but yet *our eyes are towards thee*, and wee rest on thee for direction in this case. If a man thus resteth upon God, hee may say, if I bee deceived, the Lord deceiveth me. If thou trustest not to the Lord, he may faile thee, for hee is not bound to direct and to guide thee, it fareth with us, as with those that came to aske questions of our Saviour, curious ones; the Lord sent them away without an answer, kept himselfe reserved: So if wee come to aske, not with resolution to rest upon the Lord, and in confidence he will direct us, wee shall goe without: *Isai.* 7. The Lord hath promised deliverance to *Ahaz*, yet tels him, if you will not

not beleeve, you shall not bee establisht.

Fourthly, there must be a care to please him, a constant course of obedience, else we doe not trust in him: hee that saith hee trusteth to the Lord, and doth not obey him, doth but dissemble with him, and so the Lord accounts it no better than dissembling with him, as *Ier. 42. 20.* Carry thy selfe so, that the Lord may rejoyce over thee, to doe thee good, and to guide thee in all exigents. And if thou wilt take his counsell in heavenly things, thou shalt not want it in earthly things. *Pro. 4. 6.* Forsake her not, that is (*wisdom.*) and shee shall keepe thee; love her, and she shall preserve thee; that is, if a man will preserve the uprightness of his heart in his wayes, if hee will walke by the rule that God hath appointed him; then wisdom shall preserve him, that is, Christ shall guide him in all his wayes.

Now there is a double guidance, one in a matter of sinning, or not sinning against God; when we are preserved from doing a thing that is unlawfull, which *David* calls *leading in the paths of righteousness. Psalm. 23. 3.* Secondly there is a guidance, which is a matter of blessing and comfort to us, which is called *feeding in faire pastures.* In the same *Psalm. 23. 2.* and the second doth depend upon the first. If thou be contented to be guided by the rules the Lord gives thee, he will direct thee in the things that belong to thy owne comfort and advantage. *Psalm. 25,* so the promise runnes there, verse 12. *what man is hee that fea-*

reth the Lord? him will he teach the way that hee shall chuse. (Him) that feares him, and keepes a good conscience in all things, our former care herein is that which stirreth up the Lord to guide us and direct us, in all our streights. There is a time when the Lord hath need of thy service, if thou wilt not faile him at his need, (as I may so speake) hee will not faile thee, when thou hast need of him in thy streights. And thus to have counsell given a man in such cases as doe neerely concerne him, and are of great weight, it is a great privilege. And this thou shalt have, if thou wilt follow his counsell, in other things: Therefore be exhorted upon this ground and motive to keepe thy heart more perfect with God.

The cause why *Absolon* and *Rehoboam* erred, was because they provoked the Lord formerly, and if thou bee'st also disobedient, this shall be your punishment, that because you would not hearken to his counsell, therefore when thou needest counsell, even in those things that shall bee as much as thy life, thou shalt bee infatuated. The Lord hath made no promise to such a man, to shew him the way he should choose.

5 One thing must be added, and that is this, that in any particular case, thou must be ready to resign thy selfe up to the Lord, to take his counsel. Hee will not lose his labour, thou must have a heart that is plyable to him, and yeeld thy selfe up wholly to his disposing, and not set thy selfe to any way so, but that the Lord may take thee off it. Those among men that are governours

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of others, are willing to bestow their labour on them that are pliable, but those that are of stubborn dispositions are a discouragement to them; they that *walke frowardly* with the Lord, the Lord will walke *frowardly* with them; therefore see thou resist him not in the passages of his providence, and take not the bit in thy mouth, and hold it in thy teeth, as one unwilling to be guided. So it is, men are often set on a thing upon a humour, and they will goe this way or that way, as they like, what ever come of it: but sometime the Lord in mercy barreth up the way, as we doe pits that are by the way side to keepe travellers from falling in, as they passe in the night. VVee finde sometimes the dore shut upon us in a course which we would enter into; sometimes hee sets our conscience upon us to expostulate with us, even as the angell did with *Hagar*, when shee fled from her mistresse. *Gen. 16. 18. Hagar Sarahs maid*, sayes he, *whence comest thou, and whither wilt thou goe?* returne to thy dame, and humble thy selfe under her hands. As if he should have said, *Hagar*, thinke with thy selfe who thou art, *Sarahs maid*, it was her pride caused her to runne away, she thought to have beene mistresse, and because she could not bear the rough usage of her mistresse she had forgotten her place, therefore the Angell cals her *Sarahs maid*; and bids her, *goe and humble thy selfe under her hands*, and likewise sayes hee, consider whence thou comest, from the godliest family in all the world, and consider whither thou goest, to them that know not God, that are *strangers*

gers and aliens from the commonwealth of Israel; and therefore returne unto thy Dame. So the Lord sometimes sets our consciences to expostulate with us, why doe you refuse such a course, and why doe you take such a course? and it shewes us the cause of our errings, as here the Angell did Hagar, for pride of heart was the cause of her flying from her mistresse, therefore the Angell layes, *Hagar, Sarahs maid, goe and returne unto thy mistresse, and humble thyselfe under her hands*; doe not as Iohanan did when he went to aske counsell of the Lord, whether he should goe into Egypt or not, resolve aforehand what thou wilt doe, he set downe with himselfe, that whatsoever the Lord had said, hee would goe downe into Egypt. So it is with many, though they aske counsell of the Lord, by prayer, their hearts are set upon a course, and will not be taken off. Take heed of this stiffenesse of disposition and frowardnesse of spirit, which is a frequent cause, and a cause of much misgance in mens actions, and resigne thy selfe to the Lord, and seeke counsell in the uprightnesse and plainenesse of thy heart: this resignation of our selves to the Lord, is the way to be directed upon all occasions.

Now to worke your heart to this, consider that the way God leades thee to, how improbable so ever it seemes, it will be the best and safest way for thee. Many would goe the contrary way: As Lot, when the Lord would have him flee to the mountaine, he would goe to Zoar, against Gods counsell, and you see what came of it. So David for the

numbering of the people, though better counsell was given him by *Ioab*. But he was set upon it, he would doe it, and see what came of it. So *Iosiah* would fight with *Pharaoh-Necho*, though better counsell was sent him from the *Lord*, to passe by him, and let him alone: see what came of it. Therefore take heed of this stiffenesse of affection, and wilfulnesse, and stubbornnesse of Spirit. The *Lord* may sometime give way to thy mind, but it is in judgement, not in mercy: the thing which thou hast a mind to, it may be brought to passe, but it had beene better for thee to want it. As it had beene for *Balaam*, but he would needs goe up to *Balaac*, and therefore the *Lord* bad him goe in his anger, seeing he would not be staid. Hee deales with us as *Elisba* did with those, *2 King 2. 15.* That would goe to seeke the body of *Elijah*, they had many denyals, but yet they were instant with him, so that in the end, he bad them goe, and they went, and lost their labour, for they found him not. In all cases of difficulty learne to seeke counsell of the *Lord*.

These conditions observed, you shall have the use of this privilege.

Another use is this, let every man learne from hence to be the glory of *Christ*. How is this drawn from thence, you will say? If you looke into that place in the *1 Corin. 11. 7.* See how it followes upon it: *Christ* is the head of every man and the man is the womans head, as is before in the Chapter, what followes upon that? in the seventh verse, he saies, the man is the image and glory of *God*, and the woman is the glory of the

man. The meaning is this, when thou dost consider that the *Lord* is thy husband, and thy head, thou must thinke of this with thy selfe, and every time thou findest that passage in Scripture, it should put thee in mind to carry thy selfe so as thou maist be the glory of the *Lord*, that is, thou must take heed of standing on thine owne bottome, and seeking glory to thy selfe, and of shining with thine owne beames, seeking any selfe-excellency; but as it is in the civill law, *Mulier coruscat radiis mariti*, the woman must shine with the beames of the man, that is, she must challenge nothing as her owne, but every thing she seekes or stands for, it is in the name of her Husband, therefore whatever thou hast beene, or ever thou hast sought, honour to thy selfe, and applause, and to be thought some body in the world, yet now thinke thus with thy selfe, I am the *Lords* now, I must give him all the praise, and carry my selfe so, that all my excellency may reflect upon him. And this also, that we are members, is also argument enough for it. What can the members doe? there is agility in them to doe many actions, but where have they all their vigour? is it not from the head? So all the wit, and learning thou hast, those excellencies thou hast, whence hast thou them? are they not from Christ? the members doe that they do, but in an instrumentall manner, so dost thou, whatever thou dost. Therefore consider this, and say heartily, it is not I that doe this or that, but the grace of God in me, I doe but *actus agere*, it is the influence of my head; Christ hath wrought it by me,

me, as *Paul* said, that phrase is to be marked which is used in *Galat. 2.* Hee that was mighty by *Peter* in the Apostleship over the circumcision, was also mighty by me towards the Gentiles. The Apostle doth not say, that he or *Peter* was able to doe any thing, but ascribeth all to the *Lord*. So thou shouldest thinke with thy selfe, never say, *I* have done such a thing, or brought such a thing to passe, or such an excellent performance hath come from me, but say, the *Lord* hath done such a thing by me. In other things you do it, when you see an instrument well plaid on, you commend not that, but him that useth it: that is the case of every man; wee are but the *Lord*'s instruments, he is mighty by us, wee are but acted by the *Lord*. If *Christ* be the head, thou must seeke his glory: this the *Lord* is jealous of. Sacrilege *God* will not take at the hand of any man, he will not be robd of his time, the Sabbath or any thing else, but of all other he can least away with this theft, robbing him of his glory, and yet as that is most tender to him, so our fingers are more itching after that. A man is greedy of applause, and if hee looke not narrowly to himselfe, is ready to take the glory to himselfe that belongs to the *Lord*. Thou must be the *Lords* glory, but if thou take any to thy selfe, and if thou stand on thy owne botome, thou art thy owne glory, and not his: therefore above all things take heed of being deceived and found guilty herin. But you will say, How may I come to know it? First, consider what thy end is in thy actions, whether the demonstration of some gift
God

God hath given thee, or for his glory, and if thou findest not out thy end, yet consider whether in matter or manner of doing, thou dost not steppe out of the way: if not by this, yet consider after the action is done, when any thing is well performed by thee, whether thy heart beginne not to swell in thee, that is, to thinke better of thy selfe than before, that is a signe thou takest something to thy selfe, that belongs to the *Lord*. And when a man takes that to himselfe which is the *Lords*, hee is not the glory of the *Lord*. If not by this, then,

Lastly consider whether thou art more troubled for that discredit that comes to thy selfe, or the dishonour that redownds to the *Lord* upon thy miscarriage at any time, consider how thou art affected with any thing. One step further you must goe, and that is, not onely to take nothing to yourselves, but likewise so to behave your selves that you may be an honour to God by shewing forth the graces of Christ, that the *Lord* may boast of you as he did of *Iob*. 1. *Iob*. 8. If say thou must carry thy selfe so, as the *Lord* may glory in thee, say to Sathan of thee, as he did to him of *Iob*: see'st not such a man in such a towne, in such a place, how zealous hee is, how holy? be not a shame and reproach to him, but a praise: hee lookes for this from his Saints, and therefore weares them as signets on his right hand. As great men weare diamonds, and precious stones, and iewels in their eares, about their necks, and in their rings, to adorne and beautifie them: so the servants of the *Lord* are his iewels that hee weares to make him glorious

glorious in the eyes of men: great men are known by their Jewels, and so is the Lord by his Saints. Therefore it is a great motive to keepe thy selfe unspotted of the world, to carry thy selfe so, that his name may be honoured, and his Gospell well spoken of: the glory of Christ is engaged in thy carriage, let it be such as becommeth the Gospell.

Again if Christ be the head of every man, then try and consider from hence what thy condition is. If he be the head of the Church, no man within the compasse of the true Church, but is a member of Christ. Consider whether thou be a member of his body, one that is guided by his Spirit or no: but how shall we know that?

First by this, thou shalt find the same Spirit that is in Christ living and breathing in thee; thou shalt finde the same disposition and antipathy and affections to be in thee, that are in him; abhorring that evill, and cleaving to that good he doth. For the body of the tree and the branches are not of different natures: therefore consider what *similitude* is betweene the Lord and thee. So soon as thou art a living member, the same spirit is sent into thy heart, and insinuates it selfe into thy soule, and makes it conformable to Christ in all things. As the fire insinuates it selfe into the iron, and makes it like it self: *he that is in Christ, is made a new creature, and partakes of the divine nature*, and is like him in all things. But if this be the rule, I feare my condition, for I find many contrary dispositions in me to his word, and contrary to Christ.

Vse.

Christ. *Answ.* Thou maist find many rebellions in thee, and yet the same disposition remaine in thee, that is in Christ. There may be swellings in the members, but yet there is a disposition of health and strength and vivacity that wears them out. *1 Cor. 6. 15, 16.* *know you not that your bodies are members of Christ?* Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid, &c. that is, it is impossible it should be so, it is like that speech in *Rom. 6. 1, 2.* shall we continue in sinne &c. how shall we that are dead &c. live any longer therein? That is, as it is impossible for him that is dead to sinne, to live therein; so it is impossible for him that is a member of Christ, to be made the member of an harlot. Why what say you to *Dauids* case, that fell into adultery? *Answ.* Though he did, he was not made the member of an harlot. For therefore you shall find in the 16. Verse, *hee that is glued,* for so the word in the originall signifies, that is, adhereth to an harlot, out of the inward sway of his heart, gives his mind to any sinne, hee cannot be a member of Christ: though he that is a member may fall into many sinnes, yet hee is not *κολλημενος* glued, nor knit to any sin, for then hee could not be a member of Christ: For if he bee so, hee is of the same spirit or body. Now it is impossible to be of the body of Christ; and of a contrary body too. If a man have his heart glued to any sin, he is not a member of Christ, bee it a matter of credit, learning, pleasure, or delight, any lust, if thy heart be glued to it, and thou canst not

not get them asunder, thou art not a member of Christ. For they are not wedded to any sin, but there is a divorce between every member of *Christ* and sinne, though they may fall one upon another, and toucheach, yet they are of a mouldering nature, they will not cleave together. For he that is of God is in Christ, and hath the nature of Christ in him, that will not suffer him to sin. As take water and oile, they may violently be shaken together, and they will seeme to be mixed together and to be one, but they will not continue so long, there is no coalition, because they are of diverse natures; and the one remaines water still, and the other oile: so he that is in Christ cannot cleave to any sinne, though sin and he may touch sometime, yet they are strangers, cannot stand together, they cannot cleave one to another.

Besides, consider the manner of thy obedience, all that are Christs, obey him, after that manner that the members doe the head. The headship of Christ is not an imaginarie thing; he is not like the politicke head of a body, but he is like a naturall head, that is, there comes a naturall true living influence from Christ to his members, that workes upon their hearts and wils, as the head doth on the members. There is a force that insinuates it selfe from Christ unto them, that moves them to obedience. Members, they are not moved by argumentation, by reasons and arguments, but by a certaine force that comes from the head, and from a propensnesse that is in them: so those that are Christs, are not moved by reasons simply

to

to obedience. My meaning is, not that reasons are excluded, for they have motives and arguments to move them as well as others, but that is not all, there is a proclivitie planted in them, that makes them obedient to their head *Christes*us. Consider those words, *Rom. 6. 13. wherefore give up your members as weapons of Righteousnesse unto God*, that is, so soone as a man is dead to sin and made alive to Christ, consider now you are made members of another body, have another head, and therefore as the members are obedient to the head, and ready to doe what ever that will have them doe: so bee you ready to doe what ever Christ commands. As when the head would have a thing done, the members doe it willingly without any reluctancy, consider whether thy obedience be of that nature: other men are drawne to it by outward motives from the force of arguments and reasons, but they want this inward propensnesse to bee guided by Christ, as the members are guided by the head.

Lastly consider whether thou seeke thy self or the good and advantage of others. For look what being a man hath, what state or condition in the Church, what frame of spirit within, such are his desires: so long as a man is not a member, but alone, so long he seekes the perfection of himselfe, as alone; but being a member, he seekes his good as he is a fellow member with the rest; his condition is altered, there comes another spirit into him that gives him the disposition of a member: and the well being of a member, is not to be alone, but
to

to be knit to the other members, and to be knit together with them to the head.

The Characters of a member are, first to be sociable, it is not the property of a member to bee alone, if thou be knit unto *Christ*, thou canst not want fellowship with Christians, with the members of *Christ*. As a member of the body, if there be any disjoynure made, it seeks to be knit again, so every one that is a member, cannot endure to want the fellowship of *Christ*; if a cloud come betwixt *Christ* and him, hee cannot rest till hee bee made one with him againe, or of the rest of the Saints, which are his fellow members.

Secondly another disposition of a member is to be useful and serviceable to the bodie and the rest of the members, as the hand, the eye, and the eare, in its place. So it is with ever yone that is a member of this body, whereas before he sought himselfe, and considered what did redownd to himselfe, what profit or credit, now the case is altered and his thoughts are, how shall I doe any thing which may glorifie my head and advantage my fellow members? how shall I bee usefull to God and man?

Lastly a member is compassionate, hath a fellow-feeling of what befalls any of the rest of the members, it weepes with them that weepe &c. that is, it useth to be affected with the good or with the evill, that concerne the body of the Church or any member of it, and this is a natural disposition that followes the nature of all members, and the Spirit that is in them, As Saint

Paul

| *Paul* sayes who is offended, and I burne not with
griefe and sorrow for it? I feele twinges when o-
thers are hurt. Consider how thou art affected
with the case of the Church, whether thou find
bowels of compassion in thee, and art able to take
their cause to heart, and is thy heart stirred in thee,
accordingly as thou seest it go well or ill with the
Church? If so, thou hast the dispositions of a
member, and then Christ is thy head, and
all the promises made to the body of
Christ, the Church belong to thee,
otherwise thou hast no inter-
est in him.

F f N f s.



THE TABLE.

A

Acquaintance.

A *Cquaintance* with God, how
it is gotten, part 1, page
179

Affections.

Affections moderated by humilia-
tion, 1,91

Affections what, 1,120

Affections shew what is our ut-
most end, 1,165

Affections of Gods children resist
sin, 1,216

Affections subject to Christ, 2,
117

Afflict, Afflictions.

God *afflicts* his owne people,
1,3

Afflictions do not alway follow
sin, 1,6

Examples of Gods *afflicting* his
people, 1,8

Not to thinke strange that God *af-*
flicts his children, 1,19

God slow to *afflict*, 1,21

God sustaines his people in *affli-*
ction, *Ibid.*

God brings his people thorow *af-*
liction, 1,25

Afflictions needfull, 1,29

Difference of men in *affliction*,
1,31

Afflictions why sent of God,
Ibid.

Afflictions removed in due time,
1,34

Humiliation wrought by *afflicti-*
ons, 1,80

To bee humble in *afflictions*,
1,123

To judge of our state by the issue
of *afflictions*, 1,288

In what case God *afflicts* his peo-
ple, 1,290

Apostacie.

Apostacie, the ground of it,
1,90

Ashamed.

Men *ashamed* of the power of re-
ligion, 1,60

The Table.

<p><i>Assurance.</i> <i>Assurance</i> not to bee weakned by daily failings, 1, 122, 269</p>	<p>Impediments that keepe from <i>Christ</i>, 2, 38</p>
<p><i>Avoid.</i> Afflictions sent not to be <i>avoided</i>, 1, 33</p>	<p><i>Church.</i> Comfort concerning the afflictions of the <i>Church</i>, 1, 63</p>
<p><i>B.</i> <i>Benefits.</i> Consideration of the <i>benefits</i> by <i>Christ</i>, what they serve for, 2, 37</p>	<p><i>Choose, choosing.</i> <i>Choosing</i> God the way to happi- nesse, 1, 42 Motives to <i>choose</i> God, 1, 43 God <i>chooseth</i> his people, 1, 48 See <i>God</i>.</p>
<p><i>Best.</i> Subjection to <i>Christ</i>, <i>best</i> for us, 2, 115</p>	<p><i>Compassion.</i> God hath <i>Compassion</i> of his peo- ple in affliction. 1, 20</p>
<p><i>Blasphe.</i> God afflicts his people, that his name bee not <i>blasphemed</i>, 1, 4</p>	<p><i>Confession.</i> <i>Confession</i> of sin required in fast- ing, 1, 38</p>
<p><i>Boldnesse.</i> <i>Boldnesse</i> to go to <i>Christ</i>, 2, 22</p>	<p><i>Conscience.</i> <i>Conscience</i> of good men fight a- gainst sinne, 1, 215</p>
<p><i>C.</i> <i>Calling.</i></p>	<p><i>Consent.</i> Difference in mens <i>consent</i>, 1, 210</p>
<p>Diligence in our <i>calling</i>, a meanes to humble us, 1, 130</p>	<p><i>Consent</i> in our marriage to <i>Christ</i>, 2, 2, 12</p>
<p><i>Christ.</i> Humiliation makes us cleave to <i>Christ</i>, 1, 88, 99</p>	<p><i>Consent</i>, how it is wrought, 2, 3 <i>Consent</i>, what it is, 2, 4</p>
<p>The <i>Church</i> married to <i>Christ</i>, 2, 1 Motives to take <i>Christ</i>, 2, 23 <i>Benefits</i> by <i>Christ</i>, 2, 27</p>	<p>Caution concerning our <i>consent</i>, 2, 13 Errour in mens <i>consent</i>, 2, 15</p>
	<p><i>Constancie.</i> <i>Constancie</i> caused by humiliation, 1, 73</p>
	<p><i>Constancie</i> in good duties, 1, 129 <i>Constancy</i> in fighting against sinne, 1, 218</p>
	<p><i>Contempt.</i></p>

The Table.

Contempt.
Want of feare a signe of *contempt*,
1, 14

Content.
Contentment wrought by humilia-
tion, 1, 92

Covenant.
Covenant renewed in fasting, 1,
39
Freenesse of Gods *covenant*, 1, 263

D.

Death.
Sinne at the last brings forth
death, 1, 285

Deferre.
Dangerous to *deferre* comming to
Christ, 2, 67

Discourage.
Ground not to bee *discouraged* in
afflictions, 1, 32

Difficulty.
Difficulty of leaving sin, what it
should teach us, 1, 229
Difficulty of a Christian *course*,
1, 230

Disobedience.
Disobedience to all others to obey
Christ, 2, 112

E.

End.
Affliction of Gods people tur-
ned to good in the *end*, 1,
26
End of actions double, 1, 158
To make God our chiefe *end*, *Ibid.*

How to know wee make God our
end, 1, 162

Enmity.
Enmity double, 2, 69

Error.
Error, the cause of it, 2, 63

Excellency.
Excellency of Christ, a motive to
take him, 1, 26

F.

Face.
Humiliation makes us seeke
Gods *face*, 1, 87
To seeke Gods *face*, what, 1,
132

How to know wee seeke Gods
face, 1, 155
Benefit of seeking Gods *face*,
1, 183

Faith.
Faith growes from humiliation,
1, 101
Faith what, 1, 102
Impediments to *faith*, 1, 268

Fast.
Double performance of a *fast*,
1, 38

Feare.
Feare, the nature of it, 1, 7
Feare, the want of it provokes
God, 1, 13
Feare of the creature a snare, 1,
15
Feare of God, how to bring our
hearts to it, 1, 16
Feare, the object of it, 1, 138

The Table.

<i>Fear</i> in those that are out of Christ,	2, 25	We are unable to <i>guide</i> our selves,	2, 126
<i>Fellowship.</i>		<i>Guiding</i> double,	2, 129
<i>Fellowship</i> of the Saints,	2, 97		
<i>Forgivenessse.</i>		H.	
Means of conveying <i>forgivenessse</i> ,	1, 260	<i>Hard.</i>	
Who excluded from the promise of <i>forgivenessse</i> ,	1, 263	T wo things make the law of Christ <i>hard</i> ,	2, 60
Promise of <i>forgivenessse</i> brings men to God,	1, 273	<i>Hatred.</i>	
How to bee perswaded of Gods readinesse to <i>forgive</i> sins,	1, 274	<i>Hatred</i> of sin,	1, 195
Danger of refusing the promises of <i>forgivenessse</i> ,	1, 277	<i>Hatred</i> of sin what,	1, 196
G.		<i>Head.</i>	
<i>Garment.</i>		Christ the <i>Head</i> of his Church,	2, 78
VV Edding <i>garment</i> , what,	2, 21	To chuse Christ for our <i>Head</i> ,	2, 93
<i>Glory.</i>		<i>Heart.</i>	
The wife the <i>glory</i> of the husband, how,	1, 53	God fashions the <i>heart</i> of his peo- ple in afflictions,	1, 23
Humble men give God <i>glory</i> ,	1, 113	<i>Heart</i> to bee kept in good temper,	1, 40
Christians, how they are the <i>glory</i> of Christ,	1, 133	Hardnesse of <i>heart</i> , the cause of it,	1, 56
God.		Searching the <i>heart</i> , a meanes to humble us,	1, 128
To chuse the Lord for our <i>God</i> ,	1, 41	Turning to God with the whole <i>heart</i> ,	1, 191
<i>Grace.</i>		A Christian fights against sin with his whole <i>heart</i> ,	1, 215
<i>Grace</i> to be stirred up,	1, 248	God softeneth the <i>heart</i> ,	2, 44
To stire up <i>grace</i> what,	<i>Ibid.</i>	<i>Helpe.</i>	
<i>Guide.</i>		Promises of Gods <i>helpe</i> ,	1, 57
Christ a <i>guide</i> ,	2, 80	<i>Holinesse.</i>	
How Christ <i>guides</i> those that are his,	2, 119	<i>Holinesse</i> what,	1, 150
Necessitie of Christ to bee our <i>guide</i> ,	2, 122	Nature of <i>holinesse</i> ,	1, 151
		Double <i>holinesse</i> required,	1, 153
		<i>Humble,</i>	

The Table.

<i>Humble, Humiliation.</i>		<i>Illumination.</i>	
To humble our selves after wee have sinned.	I 53	<i>Illumination</i> , in turning to God	I 193
<i>Humiliation</i> double. <i>Ibid.</i>	I 34	<i>Indeavour.</i>	
Way to <i>humiliation</i> .	I 55	<i>Indeavour</i> accepted of God.	I 56
<i>Humiliation</i> wrought by the Spirit.	I 58	<i>Inconsideration.</i>	
Without <i>humiliation</i> no mercy.	I 66	<i>Inconsideration</i> hinders men from comming to Christ.	2 53
Necessitie of <i>humiliation</i> .	I 67	<i>Influence.</i>	
	69 75	To draw <i>influence</i> from Christ.	2 95
<i>Humiliation</i> what.	I 77 78	<i>Joy.</i>	
	I 116 I 21	<i>Joy</i> , what.	I 43
Ingredients in <i>humiliation</i> .	I 82	<i>Judgement.</i>	
Difference of <i>humiliation</i> .	I 84	<i>Judgements</i> caused by the sinnes of the Saints.	I 11
Two things accompanying <i>humiliation</i> .	I 89	<i>Judgements</i> of God of three sorts.	I 279
Ends of <i>humiliation</i> .	I 99	Calamities removed in <i>Judgement</i> .	I 287
Meanes of <i>humiliation</i> .	I 103	<i>Justice.</i>	
The Lord is mercifull to the <i>humble</i> .	I 112	<i>Justice</i> of God in forgiving sin.	I 259
Meanes to humble the heart.	I 128	<i>L.</i>	
How to know wee are <i>humbled</i> .	I 131	<i>Law.</i>	
God reveales his secrets to the <i>humble</i> .	I 136	<i>Humiliation</i> wrought by the <i>law</i> .	I 79
God leaves sin in men to <i>humble</i> them.	I 240	<i>Law</i> what.	<i>ibid.</i>
All sins forgiven to the <i>humble</i> .	I 254	Use of preaching the <i>law</i> .	I 254
		<i>Libertie.</i>	
I.		<i>Libertie</i> in sin hurtfull.	2 32
<i>Jealousie.</i>		<i>Lose.</i>	
<i>Jealousie</i> what.	I 4	We <i>lose</i> nothing by subjection to Christ.	2 94
<i>Idlenes.</i>		<i>Lord.</i>	
<i>Idlenes</i> , a sin.	I 198	When our obedience is to the <i>Lord</i> .	2 110
		<i>Love</i>	
		Kk 3	

The Table.

<i>Love.</i>		Not to forget God in the midst of his <i>mercies.</i>	1 172
God afflicts his people because he loves them.	1 4	<i>Might.</i>	
<i>Love</i> makes a man humble	1 54	To doe Gods worke with all our might.	1 166
Humiliation makes us love God.	1 91	<i>Mind.</i>	
<i>Love</i> increased by humiliation.	1 102	Law of the <i>mind</i> , what.	1 209
<i>Lusting.</i>		<i>Miracle.</i>	
<i>Lusting</i> against sin in the regenerate,	1 211	The offers of mercy confirmed by miracle.	2 42
<i>M.</i>		<i>Moderate.</i>	
<i>Marriage.</i>		God <i>Moderates</i> the afflictions of his people.	1 22
Consequents of our marriage with Christ.	2 6	<i>Mourning.</i>	
How to know we are married to Christ.	2 7	Mourning for sinne when it is effectnall.	1 118
<i>Measure.</i>		<i>N.</i>	
To be afflicted in <i>measure</i> , what.	1 22	<i>Name.</i>	
<i>Meanes.</i>		The Lords <i>name</i> called upon his people.	1 47
<i>Meanes</i> limited by the end.	1 163	Not to pollute Gods <i>name</i> .	1 59
<i>Members.</i>		<i>Nature.</i>	
How to know wee are Christs members.	2 137	Sin agreeable to our <i>nature</i> .	1 225
Law of the members, what.	1 226	<i>Nearenesse.</i>	
Characters of <i>Members</i> of Christ.	2 140	Our <i>nearenes</i> to God.	1 51
<i>Mercy.</i>		<i>Necessitie.</i>	
Humiliation makes men seeke <i>Mercy.</i>	1 70	Necessity we have of Christ.	2 23
Humiliation makes men give God the praise of his <i>mercy.</i>	1 74	<i>Need.</i>	
		God afflicts us no more then needs.	2 29
		<i>Negligently.</i>	
		To doe Gods worke negligently, what.	1 167
		<i>O.</i>	
		<i>Obedience.</i>	
		Exhortation to <i>obedience</i> .	1 49
		<i>Obe-</i>	

The Table.

Obedience from humiliation 1 76

114

Faith and *obedience* goe together.

2 100

Triall of our estate from our *obedience*.

2 103

Obedience universall required.

2 107

Obedience constant.

2 129

Obedience to Christ, the manner of it.

2 139

Observation.

Observation of the manner of sins fighting.

1 250

Offend.

Wee must come to God though we have *offended* him.

1 35

Omission.

Sins of *omission*.

1 202

Ordinances.

The end of Gods *Ordinances*.

1 221

Opinion.

What *opinion* to have of our selves.

1 155 156

P.

Pardon.

Who beleeve not the offer of *pardon*.

2 39

Pardon offered to all.

2 43

Pardon taken out, what.

2 45

The time of offering *pardon*.

2

47

Peace.

Subjection to Christ brings *peace*.

2 89 92

Persecution.

God a refuge in *persecution*.

184

Person.

Person of Christ must first be looked to.

2 21

Pleasant.

Sinne hard to be left because it is *pleasant*.

1 224

Subjection to Christ *pleasant*.

88

Prayer.

Prayer a meanes to get the feare of God.

1 16

God fits his people to *prayer*.

1 23

Humiliation makes a man *pray*.

1 87

Want of *prayer* causeth want of assurance.

1 270

Priests.

Humiliation makes us *Priests* to God.

1 76

Present.

Presenting sins past, a meanes to humble men.

1 104 130

God *present* with them that seek his face.

1 183

Men thinke their *present* condition unalterable.

1 292

Want of *present* comforts keep men from Christ.

2 61

What Christians enjoy by Christ for the *present*.

2 64

Pride.

Pride cause of disobedience.

72

Pro-

The Table.

<i>Profession.</i>		<i>Reconciliation.</i>	
Outward <i>profession</i> required.	I 62	To be sought in fasting.	I 39
<i>Promise.</i>		<i>Refusing.</i>	
<i>Promise</i> of mercy to whom made.	I 119	Danger in <i>refusing</i> Christ.	2 34
<i>Promises</i> not to be applied without humiliation.	I 131	The greatest sin to <i>refuse</i> Christ.	2 35
Interest in the <i>promises</i> by turning from evil wayes.	I 186	<i>Repentance.</i>	
<i>Promises</i> part of our riches by Christ.	2 28	<i>Repentance</i> cures afflictions.	I 23
<i>Profit.</i>		<i>Repentance</i> , what should lead us to it.	I 37
Obedience to Christ for our profit.	2 79 87	Actual <i>repentance</i> for the sins of Gods children.	I 272
<i>Power.</i>		<i>Relapse.</i>	
<i>Power</i> against sin in the regenerate.	I 213	Difference in the <i>relapses</i> of the godly, and the wicked.	I 196 201 205
<i>Power</i> of Christ, in mortifying our finnes.	I 235	<i>Resisting.</i>	
<i>Purpose.</i>		Difference in the <i>resisting</i> sinne.	I 214
Good <i>purposes</i> alone insufficient.	I 222	<i>Resisting</i> of sinne in the wicked.	I 236
Ground of good <i>purposes</i> in carnall men.	I 223	<i>Reward.</i>	
Where <i>purposes</i> are sincere, God gives ability.	2 47	What use we may make of promise of reward.	I 139
R.		<i>Righteousnes.</i>	
<i>Reasons, Reasonings.</i>		<i>Righteousnes</i> of Christ not valued by unhumbl'd men.	I 71
<i>Reasons</i> to turne from sin.	I 249	S.	
False <i>reasonings</i> to be avoided.	I 107	<i>Sacrifice.</i>	
<i>Rebellion.</i>		No <i>Sacrifice</i> accepted without humiliation.	I 75
<i>Rebellion</i> must be left of them that come in to Christ.	2 46	<i>Sanctified, Sanctification.</i>	
		God will be <i>sanctified</i> in those that draw neare him.	I 4
		Humiliation for <i>sanctification</i> .	I 100
			Meanes

The Table.

Meanes of <i>sanctification</i> , 1,246	<i>Small.</i>
<i>Saviour.</i>	<i>Small frames resisted by the godly,</i>
Christ is the <i>Saviour</i> of his Church, 1,50	1,217
<i>Selfe, selves.</i>	<i>Sorrow.</i>
Not to serve our <i>selves</i> , 1,50	<i>Sorrow</i> double, 1,93
How a man may seeke and serve himselfe, 1,143,149 160	Violent <i>sorrow</i> not alway necessary, 1,94
Why we should seek God and not our <i>selves</i> , 1,168	Greatnesse of <i>sorrow</i> , the ground of it, 1,96
<i>Scripture.</i>	<i>Sorrow</i> must abide in the heart, 1,106
Studying the <i>Scripture</i> a means to humble us, 1,106	<i>Spirit.</i>
<i>Sense.</i>	<i>Spirit</i> of God dwells in the humble, 1,76
<i>Sense</i> of sin necessary, 1,98	Humiliation wrought by the <i>Spirit</i> , 1,80,109
<i>Service.</i>	Witnesse of the <i>Spirit</i> , 2,9,10
Comfort in Christs <i>service</i> , 1,66	Degrees of the witnesse of the <i>Spirit</i> , 2,11
<i>Severity.</i>	The work of the <i>Spirit</i> in us, 2,18
Gods <i>severity</i> to wicked men, 1,18	<i>Spring.</i>
<i>Sinne.</i>	<i>Spring</i> of sin in our nature, 1,237
<i>Sin</i> great, how, 1,194	<i>Striving.</i>
<i>Sin</i> forsaken differently, 1,206	<i>Striving</i> against sin, 1,241
<i>Sin</i> , ground of forsaking it, 1,208	<i>Sincerity.</i>
<i>Sin</i> how taken away, 1,271	<i>Sincerity</i> required in the covenant of grace, 1,52
All calamities from <i>sin</i> , 1,279	Triall of <i>sinceritie</i> , 1,104
To see <i>sin</i> in afflictions, 1,281	<i>Subjection.</i>
<i>Sin</i> , to see it in its colours, 1,283	What kind of <i>subjection</i> we give to Christ, 2,31
<i>Sin</i> , none to be allowed, 2,55	<i>Subjection</i> to Christ required, 2,76
<i>Selfe-love.</i>	<i>Subjection</i> what, 2,82
Motives in <i>Scripture</i> from <i>selfe-love</i> , 1,143	Motives to <i>subjection</i> , 2,85
Difference of <i>selfe-love</i> , 1,147	Triall of our <i>subjection</i> , 2,99,107
<i>Sinners.</i>	Exercise of grace brings <i>subjection</i> on, 2,118
The greatest <i>sinners</i> may come to Christ, 2,40,51	<i>Suffer</i>

The Table.

<i>Suffer.</i>	<i>Uncleannesse,</i>	1, 201
Thole that take Christ must bee content to <i>suffer,</i>	<i>Union.</i>	
2, 57	Union with Christ by marriage,	2, 5, 17
<i>Stubbornnesse.</i>	<i>Vow.</i>	
<i>Stubbornnesse</i> against God dangerous,	Vow, the nature of it,	1, 169
2, 131	<i>W.</i>	
<i>T.</i>	<i>Walke.</i>	
<i>Time.</i>	G od walks among his people,	1, 5
D anger to neglect the <i>time</i> of pardon,	<i>Washed.</i>	
2, 48 50	How farre the Saints are <i>washed,</i>	2, 19
<i>Truth.</i>	<i>Way.</i>	
<i>Truth</i> of God ingaged to forgive sinne,	Evill <i>wayes</i> not left without humiliation,	1, 71
1, 256	<i>Wicked.</i>	
<i>Turne.</i>	Men ashamed of religion before the <i>wicked,</i>	1, 61
<i>Turning</i> to God how knowne,	Description of <i>wicked</i> men,	1, 264
1, 187	<i>Wise, Wisdome.</i>	
Motives to <i>turne</i> to God,	God onely <i>wise,</i>	2, 123
1, 188	<i>Wisdome</i> of God helps to believe the promises,	1, 258
Manner of <i>turning</i> to God,	All <i>wisdome</i> from Christ,	1, 124
1, 191	<i>Word.</i>	
Effects of <i>turning</i> to God,	Christ hath given his <i>word</i> to receive sinners,	2, 41
1, 194		
No duty accepted without <i>turning</i> to God,		
1, 219		
<i>Turning</i> from evill wayes difficult,		
1, 224		
Rules of <i>turning</i> from our evill wayes,		
1, 232		
Meanes of <i>turning,</i>		
1, 242		
Double way of <i>turning</i> the heart from sinne,		
1, 245		
<i>V.</i>		
<i>Vaine.</i>	<i>Z.</i>	
T he Lord doth nothing in <i>vaine,</i>	<i>Zeale.</i>	
1, 288	Z eale not onely wanting, but disgraced,	1, 12
<i>Vertues.</i>		
Definition of morall <i>vertues,</i>		
2, 97		
<i>Victory.</i>		
<i>Victory</i> over sinne in the godly,		
1, 238		

FINIS.

Perlegi has Conciones, dignasq; judico
quæ typis mandentur.

*Tho. Weekes, R. P. Episc. Lond.
Cap. domest.*

Errata.

Part 1. page 24. line 20. for to them and, read then, p. 41 l. 19. how,
r. that. l. 20 r. not slacken, p. 6 l. 13, these, r. there. p. 78 l. 12, wan-
ding, r. wounding, p. 90, l. 15, strive, r. thrive, p. 91 l. 25, lease, r.
sense, p. 104 l. 5. me, r. one, p. 118 l. 30, r. not stirred, p. 136 l. 8, may,
r. many, p. 146 l. 12, againe, r. a gainer, p. 216 l. 25, evill, r. will,
p. 223, l. 3, bring, r. being, p. 287, l. 1. acquaintance, r. acquittance.

Part 2. p. 61. l. 20, the, r. there, l. 22, thou, r. though, p. 64 l. 26,
r. credite, p. 80 l. 10, from, r. for.

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